



Buddy Line

July 2019



The Newsletter of the Scarborough Underwater Club Inc.

Message from the President

Hello fellow SUCI Members and enthusiastic divers!

The 2019 Dive season is now well underway with the successful completion of our Open Water Weekend in Marmora. Thanks to the skill and hard work (but it's fun) of SUCI's Training staff, volunteers, and supporters, all our trainees from the Open Water, Rescue and Dive Master courses were able to attain their goals.



Lee Ann Smith was the overall Divemaster for the weekend. Instructors Raimund Krob and Lauren O'Keeffe did a superb job organizing the Open Water checkout supported by Dive Masters Mark Luo and Rick Le Blanc who also cooked many excellent burgers for lunch. Instructor Nancy Olmsted along with Training Director Jack Purchase and DM Nora Mark led the Rescue Course and DM activities.

Mike McCabe and Heather Lemieux very kindly invited everyone to their nearby cottage for a pot luck dinner on Saturday. It was a delicious meal with superb hosts.

I would like to congratulate all of our successful candidates, and thank all of our staff and shore support people. It was a fun and safe experience for all with only our secretary and president needing to be "rescued".

We still have open spots for many of our club dives this season, so sign up for some great underwater adventures!

*Mike McAllister
President*

Message from the Training Director



An issue that rises to the surface every now and again is "Proper Lifting Techniques" when gearing up and down.

We teach students to gear up in buddy pairs and to help each other with specific lifting techniques in order to promote straight back lifting of scuba units. In addition, we train buddy pairs to offer support to one another when standing and putting on fins. (Remember the Figure Four technique?)

As time passes in our diving careers, we often develop other "Proper lifting techniques" like gearing up by sitting in the back of an SUV or putting our scuba unit on a table. Of course, there are some special exceptions. I would never ask a buddy to hold my double steel 133s on their knee while I leisurely gear up. No doubt you may have noticed that many double tank folks bring their own gear up table.

The bottom line is that it is important to use safe lifting and gearing up techniques to prevent lifting injuries for both young and older folks alike. And, it is important to note that new divers will tend to copy what we do. We should all be good "Role Models".

Healthy backs make for happy divers.

*Jack Purchase
SUCI Training Director
PADI Master Instructor 265464*

SUCI's Open Water Weekend: It Takes a SUCI VILLAGE!

CONGRATULATIONS to all our students who took part in this fabulous, safe and fun weekend. We had 8 Open Water students, 2 Rescue students and 2 Dive Master Candidates. This weekend was the culmination of many, many nights in the pool, much hard work, and a great deal of effort on the part of many of SUCI's member. Thank you all. We could not do it without you.



Photo Courtesy Mike McCabe

Back L to R: Chris McKenzie, Robin McBride, Chris Robitaille, Raimund Krob, Lauren O'Keeffe, Connor Robitaille, Rick Le Blanc, Michel Ciccirella, Michael Vella, Jack Purchase, Nora Mark, Nancy Olmsted **Mid L to R:** Beverley McAllister, Michael Fischer, Mike McAllister, Garrett Betts, Noel Monte de Ramos, Francis Monte de Ramos, Joanne Fischer, Heather Lemieux, Michael McCabe **Front L to R:** Lee Ann Smith, Mark Luo, Jordan Le Blanc & Kamatzu, Jennifer McClenaghan, John Brans, Catherine Medici, Kathleen Betts, and Maggie

Open Water Weekend Staff and Support:

- Instructors: Jack Purchase, Lauren O'Keeffe, Nancy Olmsted, Raimund Krob
- Ground Support: Mike McAllister, Beverley McAllister, Michael Fischer, Jordan Le Blanc, Kathleen Betts, Catherine Medici, Heather Lemieux, who opened her heart and home to the entire Open Water team and allowed us to help her make room in the cabinet under her kitchen counter, Mike McCabe, who was instrumental in enabling us to make a GO! Decision for Marmora
- Dive Masters: Lee Ann Smith, Nora Mark, Mark Luo, Rick Le Blanc
- Hound support: Maggie, who very graciously allowed no less than three (3!) other dogs to share her digs!, Maya, who swam so much she slept through the entire ruckus on Saturday night, Kamatzu, who under Jordan's patient tutelage is slowly but surely learning how to insert thought between impulse and action, and Friday who tried to best his own record for largest stick returned

Lead Up Staff and Support:

Our Open Water weekend could not happen without the numerous SUCI members who support our Training program throughout the entire year. They include all of you who helped by participating in our 3 DSDs, our Open Water, Rescue and Dive Master courses. There are so many ways you help to make our training program a success including (but not limited to):

- Loaning, picking up, unpacking, sorting, delivering, hauling, fitting, fixing, packing, equipment and tanks

- Keeping our DSD, Open Water and other divers safe through training and pool supervision
- Graciously sharing the pool, deck, and your knowledge and support

Thank you to Ed Rutland, David Stokes, Eric Meggeson, Victor Rickey, Randal Holloway, Cheryl Maugham, Darrell Grainger, Tori Carron, Virginia Wilson, Paul Francis, Stuart Gass, David Smith, Wil Perre, Jacqueline Millar, Adrian Van Vroenhoven, Ron Bogart, PLUS ALL the other many un-named SUCI members who warmly welcomed our students and made them feel welcome, or who we may have inadvertently missed!

SPECIAL THANKS also go out to SUCI’s Super Supporters:

- Clive Peacock, Marmora resident who along with Mike McCabe, assessed conditions and helped us make a GO decision for Marmora
- Scott & Grant for filling our tanks on Saturday night
- Roman & Dan at Innerspace for allowing SUCI students to pick up their rental gear on Wednesday and use it in the pool before the weekend!

Congratulations to all of our newly certified Open Water Divers!



Back L to R: Connor Robitaille, Chris Robitaille, Noel Monte de Ramos, Francis Monte de Ramos, Mark Luo (DM), Katherine (supporter of) Michel Ciccicarella, Rick Le Blanc (DM), Chris McKenzie, Garrett Betts and Kathleen Betts **Front L to R:** Friday, Raimund Krob (OWSI), Lauren O’Keeffe (OWSI) and Robin McBride

Congratulations also to our other Open Water Students who completed their Open Water checkouts via referral:

- Sonia Sampson in Barbados with SUCI instructor Wil Perre
- John Jordan in Barrie with SUCI instructor Nancy Olmsted
- Gajendra Ratnavel in Ko Samui, Thailand with The Dive Academy
- And, if schedules align, Hema Nagar will be completing her Open Water checkout very soon – possibly with Wil!

Keep Learning with SUCI’s Advanced Open Water Course

Dates:

- Jul 31: Pre-Registration CLOSES
- Aug 6: AOWD Knowledge Development complete
- Aug 7: Equipment Review and Readiness Assessment in TPASC Deep Dive Pool
- Aug 10 & Aug 11: Five Advanced Open Water Dives in the Beautiful Thousand Islands region of the St. Lawrence River

To Pre-Register:
Complete [this form](#)

Price: \$400 for SUCI members, \$535 (\$400 course + \$135 membership) for not-yet SUCI members.

This includes all Confined Water and Open Water instruction, eLearning course and AOWD certification card. It does not include equipment, meals, fuel, accommodation, and (if applicable) the cost of dive charter boats.

Instructors: Raimund and Lauren

Rescue Diver Course: An Insider's View

I obtained my last PADI certification, Nitrox, in the Florida Keys. Once this was completed, I didn't think I would be working towards another certification for a few years as I was quite content with what I had already obtained. As my



husband and I were planning our big trip to South Africa in early 2020, he felt it was important for me to obtain my Rescue Diver Certification in Canada as the cold water diving here is very similar to what we will be experiencing in South Africa. On top of that, I had obtained all my PADI certifications abroad in lovely, warm waters whereas my husband obtained all his certifications in Ontario – so it was about time I obtained a certification in my home country.

Overall, the process of obtaining my Rescue Diver certification was very well organized and taught me very many skills



and different scenarios where I could apply them. Jack and Nancy were very patient and thorough with me during the pool sessions and my buddy Mike and I were very fortunate to have Dive Master Candidates Jennifer and John as our victims. I also had the opportunity to take my Emergency First Responder course and Oxygen Provider course with SUCI at Nancy's house in late April. The knowledge that Nancy, Wil and other SUCI leaders have was extraordinary and they provided some real life scenarios which provided good context to why it's so important to take this course seriously. What a treat to have so many members there and the spread of food was amazing!

Throughout the weeks leading up to Marmora, everyone kept telling me that the Rescue Course was their favourite course as it was so much fun playing out the scenes. I wasn't able to fully appreciate this until I finished up the weekend. It's such a big difference going from the pool to murky, cool river water! The most valuable part was how much the river environment played into our scenarios and how real it felt during those scenarios. Our missing diver scenario turned real for a minute when we thought we had lost Jennifer but it only took us a few loops to find her. Nancy decided to throw a wrench into the mix by making us go through the river current to bring our victim to

shore (thanks Nancy!) which was such a challenge! We were both spent by the time we brought the victim to shore but we students were floored by how much that scenario really drove home the importance of taking this challenge seriously.

Overall, I can finally agree with the masses and say that the Rescue Diver course was the most valuable and most fun PADI course I've taken so far! These are not only scuba diving skills but real life skills that could be applied to potentially save someone's life.

Special thanks goes out to my buddy Mike Vella, instructors Jack and Nancy, dive master candidates Jennifer and John and my hubby Mike Fischer who played victim a few times! Special thanks to everyone that came out and helped at Marmora - Rick for feeding us, Lee Ann for keeping us safe and informed and everyone else for their support! Mike and I couldn't have accomplished this without you!



Joanne Fischer

Rescue Course – A Victim’s View 😊

Prior to the ‘GO!’ decision for Marmora there were some serious concerns about conditions for our dive weekend due to heavy rain. However, it all worked out well and we were grateful that water levels decreased, and, though the vis was not great, it was entirely workable. Sunday was sunny...perfect!

The current was a bit stronger than usual where the rescues were staged posing a bit more of a challenge. Being experienced divers, our two Rescue students, Joanne Fischer and Michael Vella managed it well. They applied Rescue Course strategies and soon realized their usefulness in rescuing or helping a diver in need. As a victim, I tried to be as useless and limp as possible, or act in desperation - that is the fun part!

A special thanks to Mike McAllister for being my dive buddy on Saturday.

All of these PADI courses serve to increase our skills and awareness while scuba diving - ultimately making us better divers and dive buddies!

Nora Mark

Fact & Fiction Underwater

As the night rolled in and darkness fell, the doors of the hidden hatchway of the secret compartment built into the ship opened to emit teams of divers riding sleds, intent on completing their dangerous mission.....Sounds like a description of a scene from the James Bond spy film “Thunderball” but it is also the description of the beginning of a mission undertaken by the Italian Navy to plant explosive charges on the hulls of British warships during WWII.

Have you ever wondered where the idea of a Diver Propulsion Vehicle came from?

When Ian Fleming sat down in his home on the north coast of Jamaica to write his adventure spy novel, he was privy to secret operations during the war. His knowledge was gleaned from part of his work for British Naval Intelligence where he had taken part in underwater demolition exercises off the shore of Lake Ontario at "Camp X".

In May 1943, Ernesto Notari and his crew were riding torpedoes that had been outfitted with controls, a detachable magnetic 220 kg warhead and held two men. This idea had been developed by two Italian naval officers, Raffale Rossetti and Raffale Paolucci, at the very end of WWI in order to find a way past the minefields and nets which protected warships from attack by conventional submarines.



Photo of Miale mini sub by Maria Visintini. *Nautilus - The Story of Man Under the Sea*, Roy Davies, BBC Books, 1995.

Led by Notari, three torpedoes, called Maiali or "Pigs" by their crews, left the half-sunken freighter Olterra in which hidden doors had been secretly installed by a crew cutting and welding at night underwater. Located in the Spanish port of Algeciras, they were directly across the bay from the British naval stronghold of Gibraltar. After placing the charges on three Allied merchant ships the six divers, breathing through an early form of re-breather so that no bubbles would betray their escape, made their way back to the Olterra as the clockwork timing mechanism of the bombs ticked away. Once aboard the sanctuary of their secret base within the scuttled Oil tanker, Ernesto Notari and his crew waited for the explosions which were clearly heard inside the ship.

This Underwater Demolition Team of the Italian Navy, called Decima Mas, later engaged in successful operations against the Royal Navy, sinking several of her warships.

Fleming made Bond's adversary Emilio Largo Italian in tribute to Decima Mas, the WWII operations of which are mentioned in the novel. The *Disco Volante*, used in the film to hide and transport the stolen nuclear bombs, was a real hydrofoil made in Italy.



Photo of Decima Mas Team with Gino de la Penne seated at lower right by Gino Birindelli. *Nautilus - The Story of Man Under the Sea*, Roy Davies, BBC Books, 1995.

But what of the nuclear bombs being pilfered by the fictional criminal organization SPECTRE to be used to blackmail governments? Surely such a thing could never happen in real life?

The novel "Thunderball", first published in 1961, began much earlier as a collaboration on a screenplay between Fleming and 3 others, one of whom was former FBI employee Ernie Cuneo who had knowledge of the loss of atomic bombs by the USAF due to mechanical failure or mid-air collisions. "Broken Arrow" was the code name given to nuclear weapons involved in unexpected events such as accidental launching, firing, detonating, theft or loss of the weapon. Many such Broken Arrows were kept secret from the public for years until the 1966 international "Palomares Incident" which was too big to hide.

On January 17, 1966, a huge ball of fire expanded in the thin air at 30,000 ft over the coast of Spain near the town of Palomares. A USAF B-52 had collided with a KC-135 Tanker (basically a Boeing 707 filled with 40,000 gallons of jet fuel). The resulting explosion killed the 4-man tanker crew instantly while 3 of the 7 crew on the B-52 parachuted to safety. As the wreckage of the spinning bomber disintegrated and the four nuclear bombs it had held fell to earth, one bomb landed intact in a dry riverbed and the conventional explosive in two others exploded on impact, scattering radioactive material over a wide area, resulting in a massive 3-month cleanup effort by US forces and Spanish Civil Guards.

The fourth bomb went to the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea, which initiated "the most expensive, intensive, harrowing and feverish underwater search for a man-made object in world history". The recovery operation lasted 81 days: 33 naval vessels sealed off the search zone while a small armada of mini-research subs, diving bells and scuba

teams scoured the seabed, aided by sonar experts, oceanic photographers and 3,000 navy personnel." (May, John. *The Greenpeace Book of the Nuclear Age; The Hidden History – The Human Cost*. McClelland & Stewart, 1989. Page 145.)

The missing bomb was found by the submersible Alvin at 2,500 ft, five miles out and was crewed by William O. Rannie Jr., Valentine P. Wilson and Marvin J. McCamis. "Apart from simply wanting to get the country out of a jam, we had a personal stake in the operation", McCamis recalled later. "This was Alvin's first big job. Our group had proven that the sub could operate to depth of 6000 feet but many critics still considered the entire deep submersible program a waster of money" (Davies, Roy. *Nautilus: The Story of Man Under the Sea*. BBC books, 1995.) This event occurred one year after the film version of *Thunderball* began production.

The Palomares incident was only the most well known of the lost nukes. There were several others.

I had heard stories about a nuke that had been jettisoned in the 1950s over the St Lawrence River from a bomber that was experiencing engine failure, but upon making inquiries in 2005 while on a tour of the now-closed Canadian Forces underground command & control facility at North Bay Ontario, I was unable to find out if the bomb had been recovered or if it was still there. "That information is not available" was the gist of the reply that I received.



Training Mk - 28 & Mk - 43 Nuclear Weapons on display at "The Diefenbunker Canada's Cold War Museum", Carp Ontario – photo by Mike McAllister

In Farley Mowat's book "Eastern Passage", published in 2010, the author describes the "Broken Arrow" loss of a nuke in the St. Lawrence. Mowat unearthed the story through Freedom of Information Act requests after hearing rumours of its disappearance. That bomb had its conventional explosive detonate on impact with the surface, scattering the radioactive plutonium core in the water.

In the water off Tybee Island just east of Savanna, Georgia lies a live nuke which is the result of a collision between a B-47 and a fighter jet. Although many searches have been conducted, nothing has been found as of 2019.

This dive site is not one to be located using the "drag-the-anchor-method". So, if you see a yacht out there captained by a white-haired man with an eye patch wearing a white tux and smoking a cigarette in a holder, better call James Bond!

Mike McAllister

Bonaire the Beautiful

Before I got into diving, I would often stand in line during security check outs at airports wondering why so many people had these Bonaire scuba diving stickers on their luggage or clothing. I thought “where the heck is this place and why are so many people interested in going?” A few years and dive certifications later, my husband and I were finally on our way to this tiny island in the Dutch Caribbean.

We were lucky enough to go with a group from Innerspace Divers Supply as some of the folks had already been to Bonaire and many were very experienced divers. Instead of reminiscing about each fantastic day, I thought I could, instead, provide you with our Top 5 experiences during our week in Bonaire



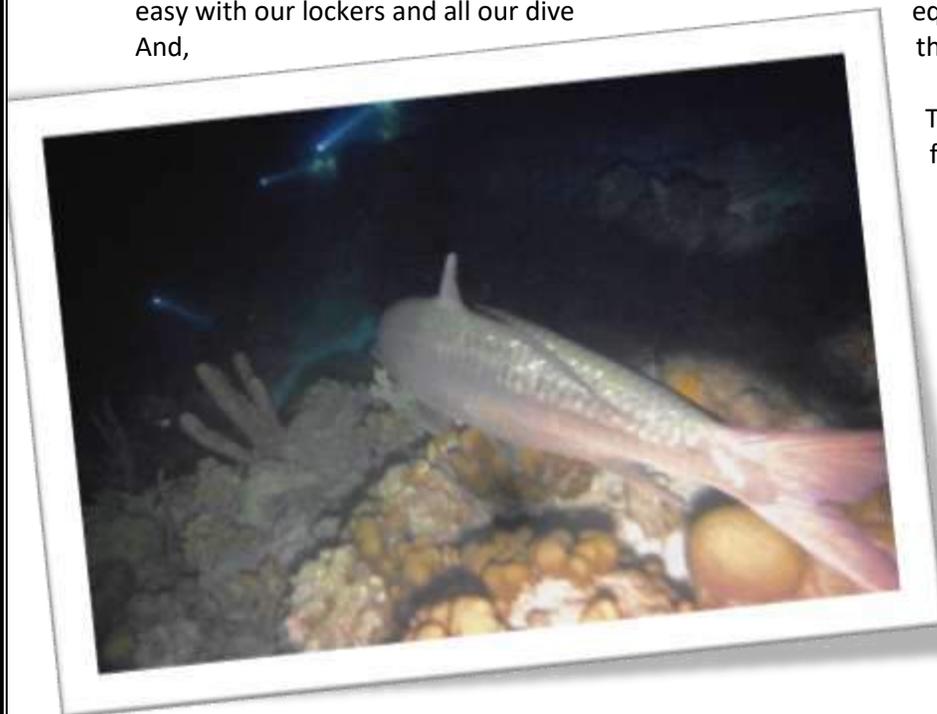
1. **Shore dives, shore dives, shore dives!** Bonaire is rated as one of the top places in the world to shore dive and it's no surprise why. The whole island is surrounded by coral reefs, warm water and spectacular marine life. It's incredibly simple to pack up your gear in your rented pick-up truck and drive a few kilometres to one of the many shore dive sites. They are clearly marked with yellow stones and the dive site name, so you can't miss them. While we did not have a chance to do the shore dives near the Salt Piers, we have heard this is one of the best ones.

No pick-up truck? No problem! The house reefs off of many of the resorts are great and will not disappoint even if you go there every day!

2. **Night Dives.** I chose to have my first night dive experience in Bonaire. Primarily because we were familiar with the house reef by day and it was steps away from our resort in case we needed to end the dive. It was super easy with our lockers and all our dive equipment only steps away from the dock. And, there were plenty of other divers as well.

The 3 night dives we did were probably my favourite dives! The difference between night and day in Bonaire is incredible! Once we turned our lights on, we were flanked on either side by huge Tarpon who used our lights for hunting. We saw fish sleeping in coral and an octopus on the hunt (who changed colours for us!).

Afterwards, we found out that there are certain times of the month when coral spawns and that Bonaire is one of the best places to see this in action! Would you like to learn more? Consider watching Jonathan Bird's Blue World on YouTube called “Bonaire Coral Spawning”.



3. **Hilma Hooker wreck.** The Hilma Hooker is the only shipwreck near Bonaire and is relatively close to the shore. You can do this dive either off a boat or from shore. I am highlighting this because it's a very easy dive (if you're a beginner and haven't experienced many wrecks), the visibility is great and the way in which the boat sunk makes it very easy to see the propellers and masts. While there is no opportunity to penetrate



the wreck, the wreck itself is very easy to navigate and explore and there is a lot of marine life. Plus it has an interesting back story as drug enforcement agencies were investigating the ship and crew for suspected drug transportation. Turns out the ship had a fake bulkhead where 25,000 lbs of marijuana was being hidden!

4. **Coral restoration program.** While researching diving in Bonaire prior to the trip, we discovered that Bonaire was very serious about the preservation and restoration of the coral and marine life surrounding the island. You cannot appreciate all this work until you finally get to see it under water. This work started in February 2012 and focused on the restoration of the shallow reefs by establishing Staghorn and Elkhorn coral nurseries and restoration sites. As per the statistics on the Reef Renewal Bonaire site, there are currently over 12,000 corals grown in the nurseries and over 14,000 corals have been transplanted back to Bonaire's reefs! You may even have the opportunity to assist in the coral restoration program during one of your dives.

5. **Seahorse.** While everyone has their own dive objective, ours was to see a seahorse in Bonaire. We were very lucky to have seen a few of them come

during our dives and we had the chance to really up close to one that tied itself off on some coral. The light was shining perfectly so that we could see its shadow and its vibrant orange and white colours. It was such a privilege to see such a small, interesting creature along a large coral wall



After spending a week in diving paradise, we have to say that it was the best trip we have ever taken. Bonaire is such a beautiful island, situated in warm waters with such wonderful people. We were able to complete just over a dozen dives in a week and each dive was truly magical. We never wanted a dive to end. We will definitely come back in the future and we both can now say we're among those people with Bonaire scuba diving stickers on our luggage.

Joanne Fischer