

BLUE OCEAN DIVERS

NEWSLETTER

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Welcome to our December Newsletter

Hi Everyone. Here it is, the last newsletter of the year. It's the time of the year for reflection, giving thanks, family, plans and resolutions. The passing of November marks the end of our 10th year of serving the Southern Tier and supporting YOUR diving needs. From our humble beginnings on Clinton Street we have grown to our current location providing all the dive offerings of equipment selection, local & distant travel and state of the art education for the beginner to instructor or even technical diver, you have come to take for granted.

Our dive family has grown as many of your families have. Some of our staff has moved to other areas of the country, some have gotten married and some now have families of their own. Others have joined the Blue Ocean Divers' family allowing us to grow in size and ability.

Personally, Patti & I have much to be thankful for. More than space here allows. Let us just say thank you to all of our dive buddies, you are more special than family because you chose us.

As we look forward to our next 10 years we are taking one step at a time. We want to continue to be your dive shop of choice and provide you the diving service you want. Please let us know how we can better support your diving needs.

Mach10 Mike

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News from the Dive Center

Blue Ocean Divers Open House

Join the dive center staff as we celebrate the Holidays and our 10 years of successfully providing Southern Tier divers what they need and want in Education, Equipment and Travel. We will have family drinks and light snacks for all that come by and say hi and share a dive story. We will also have specials on select in-stock wetsuits and in-stock dive computers during our open house event. Plan now to join our celebration December 4th from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

The Unknown Diver

Hello Divers

As usual at this time of year I spent the last few weeks sitting in the woods for no apparent reason at all. A new twist however this season, was that I was accompanied by a first time hunter. Although the young man is just short of his fifteenth birthday, he is wise beyond his years. While not saying so, he conveyed his thoughts telepathically. Boring as watching paint dry. In some ways I am inclined to agree with him. So far this doesn't have anything to do with Diving. Please indulge me while I attempt to make a point. One could take the position the young huntsman's expectations were higher than the population of the chosen quarry. It would be tough to counter that view. That being said who is at fault here? In my opinion the problem lies with the mentor. I can't fault the young man anymore than I can the critters in the woods who have a vested interest in not becoming table fare. Perhaps taking more time to explain the odds of success would have tempered his expectations. One might even have suggested that just being in the outdoors is equally rewarding.

Having ample time to consider all this, I thought about how we as certified divers present the experience to (especially young) potential divers. Did we explain the course requirements and the confined and open water criteria? Will they hit the water expecting to see Flipper free Willy? On a local dive will they be comfortable with somewhat limited visibility? Their expectations and ultimately enjoyment may well depend on how we set the stage. Being seasoned veterans we understand that all dives are good dives, but know some dives are better. As dive buddies and mentors we need to enlighten as well as encourage new divers.

Never Dive Over Your Head..
and MERRY CHRISTMAS
"The Unknown Diver"

P.S. This just in from my good friends Divemaster Earl and his wife "Sweetie". It seems like the two recently went to one of the marriage self help sessions, or what ever those things are called. The instructor advised the couples that it is critical in marriage to really understand what s important to their mate. He challenged the husbands in the room. "How many of you know what your wife's favorite flower is"? Earl quickly shouted out "Gold Medal All Purpose". Ya gotta love him!

Trivia Contest

With the new website I was able to get real questions up on the website but they couldn't have been very hard. I didn't stump anyone who answered. So everyone that took a go at the questions gets their name put in the old dive hood. And the name that comes out is Debbie Dolan. So Debbie, stop on down to Blue Ocean Divers and pick up your bottle of mask defog.

How's your supply of mask defog? Go to our website and answer the 2 Trivia questions. Upon submittal you will be told if you found the correct answers to the questions. Your chances in the drawing will be based on the number of questions you answered correctly. If you answer both questions correctly you will have 2 chances in the drawing. If you answer only one correctly you will get one chance in the drawing. Good luck to one and all.



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Need a stocking stuffer, how about a SAFETY SAUSAGE!

"Why the heck didn't I buy a safety sausage?" This is what you will be thinking (besides a few choice words, of course) if you surface a distance away from the dive boat and the boat doesn't see you.

Whether you lost the group underwater or got carried away with the current, it is never a good feeling. And surfacing and only barely seeing the dive boat does not help matters.

You may think it is easy to see you while you are at the surface. Trust me, it's not. Divers will blend in with the water, especially if there are waves and whitecaps. You need something to make you stand out and attract the attention of the dive boat.

This is where a safety sausage comes into play. It is one of the cheaper scuba diving accessories to buy and one you will be infinitely grateful to have if you ever need one.

What is a scuba diving safety sausage?

It is actually a very simple device. Most sausages are long, thin tubes made of brightly colored material. You fill them with air so you will be visible from quite a distance away. When not inflated they are rolled up and can easily fit into a BCD pocket or attach to a D-ring on your BCD via a clip.

How do I use a safety sausage?

OK, you're at the surface and have determined that the dive boat cannot see you. Don't panic. Take out your safety tube and unroll it. You can inflate it orally, with your regulator (or octopus) or with your BC inflator hose depending on the type of sausage you have.

It is a good idea to practice inflating your safety device before you dive with it. You will be stressed enough if you ever need to use it, so you don't want this to be the time to practice using it. The sooner you get it out, the better - especially if you are in a current.

Sausages can also get holes in them so it is also a good idea to inflate the device before you dive to make sure all is OK.

Hold the sausage up so the dive boat can see you. The sausage should stand upright but sometimes in windy conditions it may bend over. Do the best you can to get it to stand straight so it will be easier to spot you. Once the dive boat sees you, leave the sausage inflated so other boat traffic will also be able to spot you. In the evening or for night diving shine your flash light up through the sausage. It will light up like a neon sign.

You should try and have the sausage attached to you in some way. The last thing you want is the device to be blown away from you and watch the boat going after the sausage and not you.



Educational Opportunities

On-Line EAN Special for all of December & January

We'll make this as simple as possible. Sign-up and complete the PADI on-line training for Enriched Air and come to Blue Ocean Divers to complete the certification any Saturday in December or January. No open water dives required.

Dive more with less nitrogen loading and experience a post dive feeling only the young can attest to. Nitrox will not make you a safer diver, just a diver able to dive longer and more often than a diver diving on straight air.

Please make sure and schedule an appointment to complete your certification so we can provide adequate staff for those attending each Saturday.

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Equipment Specialty

Whether it's a regulator problem, a wet suit tear or a broken mask strap, the Equipment Specialist course can help. This Specialty course prepares you for the basic equipment maintenance, care and adjustments you'll encounter every day. In addition, you'll get the valuable background on equipment repair and purchase, making you better able to protect your investment.

During your PADI Equipment Specialist program, you'll familiarize yourself with the operation and maintenance of your personal equipment. Your instructor might also provide the opportunity to review new or unfamiliar dive equipment. The program is not an equipment repair program but it does give you:

- ★ Theory, principles and operation of dive equipment
- ★ Routine recommended care and maintenance procedures
- ★ Common problems with equipment and recommended professional maintenance procedures
- ★ Simple suggestions for comfortable equipment configurations and an introduction to new equipment

Join us and your friends, December 5th from 10 a.m. Until 2 p.m. and learn what you need and how you can save a dive even if you are on the dive boat waiting to get in the water.

Travel

Bonaire at Easter

Blue Ocean Divers has reserved space for 16 folks to spend Easter 2010 (April 3rd through April 10th) to experience Bonaire and Buddy Dive Resort, an unhurried, unspoiled natural paradise offering spectacular sunsets, gentle breezes and crystal clear, turquoise waters. Buddy's is a resort where you can DIVE DIVE DIVE, take part in a multitude of activities or just sit back, relax and enjoy the atmosphere.

- This trip is loaded with extras.
- 8 days 7 nights double occupancy lodging in one bedroom apt
- 6 boat dives
- Unlimited shore diving
- Free Nitrox for EAN certified divers
- 7 days rental vehicle (double cabin pick-up truck or van)
- American style breakfast buffet daily
- Lunch Al a Cart from menu
- Welcome drink
- Manager's Rum Punch Party
- Airport transfers
- Airfare is not included

Diving In St Lucia

St Lucia is a diving paradise. The island is at the tip of an underwater volcano where both beginner and experienced divers alike will enjoy the stunning variety of coral, sponge and marine life. Artificial reefs have developed around a number of sunken ships which have become home to huge gorgonians, black coral trees, gigantic barrel sponges, purple vase sponges and black lace corals. Exciting Caribbean diving trips will reveal turtles, nurse sharks, seahorses, angel fish, and golden spotted eels, to name but a few, among the dazzling cross section of Caribbean marine life.

There are several spectacular diving sites just off St Lucia, ranging from easy to challenging. Keyhole Pinnacles consists of 4 seamounts rising from incredible depths to within a few feet of the surface. Superman's Flight, a drift dive on a gentle wall which drops to 1,600 feet. At the base of Gros Piton the Coral Gardens rise from a depth of 15

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to 50 feet and Anse La Raye, midway up the west coast is a superb wall and drift dive, where huge boulders cover a shallower slope creating fascinating formations to explore. On the point of Anse Chastenet, a plateau slopes gently from 40 - 60 feet. The reefs fall away to a depth of 140 feet in a unique coral chain, meandering out from the Bay. A number of shipwrecks provide adventure and exploration for divers. For the experienced only, off the southern part of the island, the Waiwinette freighter lies 90 feet below. The currents here make this dive extremely challenging, whereas further up the coast off Castries, there is a pleasant wreck dive in 20 feet of water for those less experienced.

Turks and Caicos Islands

The Turks and Caicos Islands are surrounded by one of the most extensive coral reef systems worldwide (65 miles across and 200 miles long). As a result, the islands are consistently ranked as one of the premier diving locations in the world.

Excellent visibility (up to 200 feet), pristine reefs, abundant tropical flora and fauna, fish and other marine life, quality diving services and easy conditions make the Turks and Caicos Islands a world class diving destination. There is exceptional wall diving starting in shallow turquoise water and dropping off into the deep blue giving a real thrill. The reef is relatively close to the beach which makes for accessible beach dives. Shipwrecks, old and new further increase the multiplicity of the islands as an outstanding diving destination.

Under the National Parks Ordinance, vast areas have been set aside as marine park and fisheries reserves, replenishment, and mooring buoys have been established at all dive sites and mooring areas to avoid any possible damage from anchors. As part of the general preservation and protection drive, divers visiting Turks and Caicos are encouraged to observe, respect and enjoy the pristine natural beauty of the marine environment and to leave the reef as healthy as they found it.

A 22 mile-wide channel, the Columbus Passage, separates the Turks Islands from the Caicos Islands. This 8,000 foot deep passage serves as major transit lines for migrating, spotted eagle rays, manta rays, turtles and dolphins.

Bob Hamilton

Calendar

Date	Activity
Every Saturday in December	Nitrox Certification completion class
December 4	Blue Ocean Divers Open House 6 - 8 p.m.
December 5	PADI Equipment Specialty
December 11	Snorkeling with Santa at the West Family YMCA
December 24	Blue Ocean Divers will close at 3 p.m.
December 25	Christmas Day - Scuba Santa is coming!
Every Saturday in January	Nitrox Certification completion class
December 31	Happy New Year - Closing at 5 p.m.
January 1	Blue Ocean Divers will be CLOSED
January 6	Blue Ocean Divers will close at 5 p.m. for staff training

Store Hours

Monday – Friday Noon until 8:00 p.m.

Saturday 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.

Sunday Closed