



President's Corner

Fellow Ontario Underwater Council Members:

This is my first letter to you as President of OUC and I'm honoured and excited about the opportunity to be able to serve you. Mike Briggs (my predecessor) left big shoes to fill, but he did an excellent job in showing me the ropes before moving to his new home in New Brunswick. Mike, being the kind of guy he is, is also filling in as OUC Treasurer until we find a replacement (thank-you on all counts Mike!). If you know of a diver with a deep (pun intended) interest in finances and a passion for promoting safe scuba diving in our province, please forward me his or her name and contact information.

My goal is to grow OUC's membership to over 5,000 in a series of steps over the next 4 years. One of the first steps to making that happen is building a great leadership team. We're well on our way to doing that, with Chantal Gagnon as Communications Director, and Ron Irvine as Director of Sport Safety. Additionally, 3 strong candidates are being interviewed for the position of (interim) Membership Director to serve from now until the OUC Annual General Meeting on Sunday, November 13th. The other steps in this plan (of which I will be consulting with some of you to develop) I commit to sharing with you in my next letter!

As you know, the OUC represents the diving community all across the province through its team of Regional Coordinators. I'm delighted to introduce you to the latest addition to that team; Ryan Vickers, Regional Coordinator, Ontario North. Congratulations Ryan and welcome to the team!

Regional Coordinators are critical members of the OUC, and their position is an important, challenging, and fun one. If you (or someone you know) want to know more about becoming an OUC Regional Coordinator, please contact me, or any member of the Board, and we'll be happy to fill you in on the details. We are interviewing now for Regional Coordinators Ontario East (Kingston, Brockville) and Ontario South-West (Sarnia-Windsor).

The OUC and its member clubs help sponsor, promote, organize, and run dozens of exciting events every year. Once such OUC-promoted

event coming up soon is the Great Lakes Chapter of the Undersea and Hyperbaric Medical Society's "Diving & Medicine" symposium on October 22nd, 2005. Another is on February 24th, 25th, & 26th, at Scuba World at the Advil Outdoor Adventure Show where we'll be organizing the "Cayman Islands' Scuba Demo Tank". Area Dive Stores and Clubs are invited to put on educational, entertaining, and fun displays for the public hourly throughout the show. On Saturday, March 18th, 2006, the OUC and our member clubs will show our wackier side when we host the 2nd annual resurrection of the Peterborough Ice Floe Races! And on Fathers Day weekend (June 17th & 18th) please join us for a fun-filled family weekend at the OUC Treasure Hunt (Ontario's largest and longest-established!).

The OUC is about more than just educational, entertaining, and fun events though. We have a more serious side that involves things like operating the province's first and longest-established compressed-air-station-testing program for scuba divers. We also lobby governments at all three levels (municipal, provincial, and federal) and are advocates of our sport at every opportunity and in every forum. For example, recently we helped stop the closure of hyperbaric facilities in Toronto, clarified to members existing Federal regulations pertaining to transportation of Scuba cylinders, and worked with the Ministry of Natural Resources to establish a vessel sinking policy (artificial reef). We also provided input on proposed changes to the Canada Shipping Act to help promote access to, protect, and preserve our underwater marine heritage, and worked with the Provincial Coroner's office on learning from and preventing fatalities in our sport. Annually, we collect and publish a provincial scuba diving incident report, and make recommendations and implement programs to reduce or prevent these in the future. We also worked with Parks Canada to develop and implement a comprehensive 6-point Scuba Diving Safety Awareness Program, which is being rolled out in Fathom Five, Tobermory, Canada's "Freshwater Shipwreck Capital" this year. And our affordable liability insurance policy promotes safe, responsible diving for all our members.

In conclusion, I am looking forward to working to serve you and our sport to the best of my ability. And I won't be shy about asking for your help in doing that!

By Raimund Krob

We would like to hear from you...

Our next newsletter is planned for an early December release. If you have any news to share, diving humour, information on recent or upcoming events, info on new or favourite dive sites we might enjoy visiting or plan for this winter, or an invitation to an activity... please send us a note at ouc@underwatercouncil.com so that we can share it with other members. We would appreciate input for the Winter issue by November 15th. If newsletter release dates are not timely for your news, we can at least post your bulletin on the OUC website.

Editor's note: unless stated otherwise, articles are written by the editor, Chantal Gagnon, OUC Communications Director, and based on the most accurate information available at time of writing.

Welcome New Commercial Members

Neptune's Locker

Josephine & Michael Lanigan
31 Main St., Unit #2, Penetang, ON L9M 1S2
Ph: 705-549-6444
Fax: 705-549-2130

TravelPlus

Andrea Parsonage
andrea.parsonage@travelplus.ca
Ph. (705) 739-0581

Check out the OUC for more comprehensive contact information on our commercial members. Individual Membership forms are now available on-line.

News

The Press In The Press

In June 2005 Diver Magazine, North America's longest publishing dive magazine, announced that it had purchased Scuba Press. Ontario based Scuba Press began publishing in the Spring of 2004 and published four issues before being purchased by Diver. Canada's Diver Magazine has been the voice of Canadian divers for over three decades. The magazine is headquartered in Vancouver, with writer and long-time OUC volunteer Stephen Weir representing the magazine's needs in Ontario. Stephen advises that Diver Magazine is honouring Scuba Press's subscription list so subscribers will have gotten their replacement magazines in September.

PADI Growth Stats

Statistics presented in the Third Quarter Dive Industry News bulletin sent by PADI to its professional members, reveal a trend that all in the dive community can rejoice over. At PADI, 2004 ended with certification numbers up 3.4%, the first increase in three years, and 2005 figures for the first quarter also showed an increase over the same period in 2004. Considering that (according to PADI stats) 20% of all open water divers continue on to the next step, even though 83% say they are interested in doing so, it is important to get new divers out diving soon and to provide opportunities for continued learning. Based on PADI stats whereby 67% of Advance divers invest in full sets of gear versus 29 percent of Open Water Divers, the benefits extend to retailers and manufacturers as well. Certified divers, dive professionals, retailers and Clubs all can contribute significantly to promoting diving and education with ensuing benefits for all.

More Thanks

In the May issue of our newsletter, we listed clubs that had participated in the scuba demos at Scuba World at the Outdoor Adventure Show. It should be noted that Canadian Sport Divers of Belleville also spent time in the tank. Many thanks to all who participated. We hope to have representation from many more clubs at the 2006 show!



A Word From The OUC Webmaster, Bill Doran

Coming to the website over the Winter we have the following items. If you have other suggestions please pass them along to webmaster@underwatercouncil.com

Members Video Library

The OUC has a wonderful selection of Videos and other resources that are available to members. Chantal and I are working hard to use today's technology to make these more available to OUC members. With this in mind here is the plan.

On the website there is a new section that is called Members library. Over the coming weeks Bill will be introducing titles that will be available for members to view online either at their home or perhaps at a club meeting or social. There will be three sections 1) Library Listing – What is available? 2) View On Line – a monthly selection will be available and 3) Check out a copy while on line – Clubs will be able to check out a copy from the library. This will be couriered to the club and back to the OUC Archives. This method will make the library available to divers throughout Ontario.

These videos and other resources will be available to members only and contact your club executive to coordinate the way your club will be using this service.

On line order for OUC items

Now members can order insignia items such as hats shirts and books right off the web site. The order system will give you the ability to order the item(s), give your shipping information and tell which method of payment you would like Cheque or Visa. If you choose cheque, then once the cheque is received the OUC office will ship the item. To make the Visa option affordable for members, the Visa information can be called in to the office after you order and they will process the order and then ship your order.

Web Site Survey (5 questions)

Please go on to the web site and give us your opinion using this survey. We hope to make a permanent spot on the Web site for mini member surveys.

- 1) What does your club do to keep you active through the winter?
- 2) What links would you like to see on the web site that you think could help members?
- 3) What other information on the web site do you think could help members?
- 4) If it would save the OUC money would you like your newsletter emailed?
- 5) What items on the website now do you not find useful (should be removed or revamped)?

Coming Web enhancements

- 1) Dive Planning
- 2) A click on Map of the Territories for finding your local OUC clubs and service providers.



Retirement

The Ontario Underwater Council (OUC) President Mike Briggs has retired. Mr. Briggs and his family have moved to Moncton, New Brunswick where the former OUC president has established a business. His position is being filled by Raimund Krob, the former president of S.U.C.I. and OUC's Safety Director until his recent appointment as president.

Events & Announcements

R E C E N T E V E N T S

OUC Treasure Hunt

Father's Day weekend is synonymous with OUC Treasure Hunt weekend. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we had prizes for everyone. Putting on such an event requires an enormous coordination effort with a large number of volunteers. Doug Clarke, from the Canadian Sports Divers Scuba Club, did a splendid job spearheading the effort this year. Many thanks on behalf of the Board to Doug, the many volunteers and our donors for helping make this event a great success.

Thank you to all our donors:

AAA aquasports inc.
Canadian Sport Divers
Canadian Sport Subs Ltd.
Colt Creek
Fathom Five Nat'l Marine Park
Fennel, Jim
First Stage Enterprises
Great Lakes Chapter UHMS
Marrick's Landing
Merit Travel Group
National Event Management
Nautilus Scuba Club
Newmarket Graphics
Ontario Underwater Council
ReefNet
Scuba 2000
Tim's Diving Supplies Ltd
TravelPlus
John & Linda Van de Broek
Waterline Sports
Stephen Weir
Whites Manufacturing
Innerspace Divers Supply

We look forward to an even better and bigger next year!

The Great Canadian Shoreline Clean-up

Steel City Sport Divers ran its first annual clean up in Hamilton on September 10th. There were twenty-one participants, including divers who were not club members. We even had a boat available in the water in case there were safety issues. The first Grand Prize was a year membership to the Hamilton Conservation Authority and the second, a wrist-mounted compass donated by Bob's Scuba. Everyone received at least one prize, all donated by the following supporters:

- Ontario Underwater Council (<http://www.UnderwaterCouncil.com>)
- Divers Alert Network (<http://www.DiversAlertNetwork.org>)
- Rec and Tek Scuba (<http://www.recandtekscuba.com>)
- Float 'n Flag (<http://www.floatnflag.com>)
- Dan's Dive Shop (<http://www.dansdiveshop.ca>)
- Adventure Scuba (<http://www.adventurescuba.ca>)
- Blockbuster Video (<http://www.Blockbuster.ca>)

We worked with the Hamilton Conservation Authority (<http://www.conservationhamilton.ca/>) and did our dive within the boundaries of Confederation Park on the South-Western shore of Lake Ontario. .

When we showed up on Saturday morning at 8 am, we were watching 3 to 4 foot breakers. Though the wind did progressively get quieter, there were still issues. Because of the shallowness of the shoreline, there was a strong undertow that was in competition with the rollers coming in. Several teams attempted to get in the water, but it was a losing battle. A few teams got out about a hundred yards, but the visibility was faceplate. The dive was scrubbed and everyone returned to shore. We continued the event by doing a shoreline clean up.

As a result of TD Canada Trust having a "Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup" event scheduled for this date and a team scheduled to work in the area we were doing our dive, a TV reporter showed up. Some of us geared up again and went back into the water for some visuals for him to use during the news report. Luckily, they left the embarrassing shots of us falling into the surf on the editing room floor!

Preparation was critical to making this successful, from contacting the Conservation Authority to arranging for a

OUC – AGM

special rider on our OUC insurance policy; from checking water and weather conditions to determining the diving topography. And of course, securing bags for garbage collection, prizes and most importantly, divers.

After packing up, we headed off to a local restaurant to talk about the dive, socialize with our new friends, and hand out the prizes.

Joining forces with the TD clean up effort would afford us some backing and much needed media exposure. So, I have already contacted this group to indicate our interest in participating next year.

All in all, it was a great experience. A video put together by the Windsor Skin and Scuba club, available from the OUC lending library, was a great source of reference to help us plan this event. The organizers thought it would be important to put their experiences out to other clubs to help them. Following along the lines of helping others learn from one's experiences, I would be willing to assist anyone who is interested in setting up their own clean up dive. I will be putting together some resources, which I will post on the OUC web site. (In the meantime, you can view a version of this report which includes more organizational details on the OUC website.)

By John Raso

Upcoming Events

Great Lakes Chapter – Undersea and Hyperbaric Medical Society

This annual Where Diving and Medicine Meet symposium is scheduled for Saturday, October 22, 2005 in Burlington. With discussions on: Alcohol and Diving - Fact and Folklore; Drugs and Diving; A New Diving Emergency Network in Quebec; DAN Data and Dive Computers; Diving with Computers and Avoiding DCS; Hyperbaric Services Around the Great Lakes; Human Factors and Diving and Rescue Diver - Real World vs Training, there is something of interest for all. Lunch is provided, with refreshments after the meeting. See posting on the OUC website for details.

If you would like to volunteer to draft an article on the highlights of this meeting and key messages to share with other OUC members, please advise the Editor at chantal-ouc@sympatico.ca. We will include it in the December newsletter.

As announced in the President's Message, the OUC Annual General Meeting will be held on November 13th at the Sports Alliance Centre where the OUC offices are housed. Voting members will receive their invitation early in October. Non-voting members are also welcome to participate and add their voices to make the OUC chorus even stronger. As stated in the President's message, there are a number of positions up for Election (you need not be a voting member to be nominated or present yourself for election). In some cases, candidates are already being interviewed in the hopes of formalizing their appointment at the AGM. In other cases, we are still looking for representation and nominations.

Director Finance (Mike Briggs on interim basis); Director Membership Services; Regional Coordinators:

East 1 - Peterborough, Belleville, Kingston, Cornwall

East 2 - Ottawa area

West - Kitchener, London, Chatham, Windsor areas

N.West - The rest of Ontario west to the Manitoba border (North = Barrie north to approx Sudbury & Sault Ste. Marie, Ryan is our new coordinator)

If you are prepared to volunteer some time to help promote safe scuba diving practices, enhance sport self governance, encourage environmental awareness, promote continuing education and youth participation in recreational diving, it is time to have YOUR voice heard. Come to the AGM: great opportunity to meet other diving advocates and possibly win a door prize!

Participating in OUC Board meetings is easier than ever: through Raimund's employer, Bell Canada, we now have access to teleconferencing for all our meetings. We can even dial in from our cell phones, if need be!

Safety

To Our Hyperbaric Stakeholders:

We would like to give you an update on the progress of our new chamber. Our new multi-place shell has been completed and it is now in the process of being pressure tested. After these tests are done, the shell will be outfitted according to our specs. The air receivers and deluge tanks are already on site at TGH.

We are expecting that the chamber will arrive at TGH in the Fall. Testing and staff training will begin after the chamber installation is complete. We will continue to operate our current interim chamber until the new Fink chamber is fully functional.

Thank you for your ongoing support as we get ready for our new chamber. As always, we would be pleased to answer any questions you may have or hear about our Hyperbaric chamber, and we encourage you to call us directly with any of your concerns or questions.

Best regards,

Dr. Wilf DeMajo

Medical Director

TGH Hyperbaric Medicine

(please contact through TGH locating at 416-340-3155)



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History Buffs

Part of the OUC website revamp includes updating the History of OUC section. Though the early years are covered off quite well, the 70's, 80's, 90's and 2000's are somewhat skeletal. We would appreciate the contributions of the membership at large in putting some "meat" on those bones and sending in photos to put in the gallery. (We can arrange to scan your photos and return them to you if you are not able to send them to us electronically.) Our Regional Coordinator for Central will be spearheading this effort for us. Please contact Dorine How at OUC.CENTRAL@gmail.com and send her your contributions. We are hoping to have all input in by November 25 in order to identify any remaining gaps, consolidate the input and update the website before the end of the year.

Invitations

Artificial Reef Building: 4D Diving Club of Barrie is actively fundraising to build an artificial Fish Habitat for both fish and Divers to enjoy. The Permits are in and the location, on the North-East shore of Lake Simcoe, is approved. Now we just need to reach our target for dollars. We hope to sink the reef in October. This location is at a park and a shore dive so that all can enjoy. Any donations would be greatly appreciated. You can send them either through the OUC or direct to our Club. For more information please email bill@4ddiving.com or call (705) 725-2855. Thank you in advance! Bill Doran

Underwater Scooter Courses by 4D Diving Club: 4D Diving is having great success with their underwater scooters. If your club is interested in using this as a fundraiser contact Bill for more information on the Underwater Diver Propulsion Vehicle Pilot Course. They are also willing to come to one of your pool nights and do a discover Scooter session, great for members interest and also a possible fundraiser. Contact Bill Doran at bill@4ddiving.com or (705) 725-2855. Yours in fun safe diving, Bill Doran

Rest & Relaxation

Here is another Ontario Science Centre feature worth checking into: "Ocean Men - Extreme Dive". Though it's breath hold diving, not SCUBA, it might be interesting anyhow. For reviews check out the following websites:

www.ontariosciencecentre.ca/imax/default.asp

www.filmscouts.com/scripts/review.cfm?File=3002

A Little Diving Humour

Wreck diving like no where else...

Shipwrecked

A diver was shipwrecked up onto a lonely and tropical shore. As he stood up he noticed his hands were purple, he looked at his feet, and they were purple, worriedly he unzipped his wetsuit and his chest and stomach were purple. With his head in his hands he cried, "Oh my God! I've been marooned!"

Where?

Two divers go diving off a small rented boat and accidentally discover a virgin wreck with untouched portholes.

As they get back to the shore the first one says, "I hope you can remember the spot where we found that wreck."

The other divers answers, "Don't worry, I made an 'X' on the side of the boat to mark the spot."

"You idiot!" cries the first, "How do you know we will get the same boat tomorrow?"

Dive Destinations:#5

As Dive Club leaders we are always striving to find new spots and to keep things exciting for members. In the hopes of getting other clubs to start a directory of sites here is a little known spot for you to try.

We call it the Swing Bridge at the Severn River. This is due to the bridge itself. This site offers a modest current in which you can introduce members to drift or River diving. There is often lots to find that has been pushed down stream. IF you would like to check it out below are the directions.

Directions

All of our directions to sites start form the Tim Horton's / Wendy's Parking lot on Dunlop St West of the 400 highway.

- from Tim Horton's on Dunlop street W.
- turn right onto Dunlop street
- go over the bridge and turn left onto hwy 400
- take highway 400 staying in the center lane to highway 11
- approximately 50 km exit onto south sparrow lake road (county road 38) on your right side of the highway
- go over the bridge and turn right at the stop sign
- approximately 6.8 km to peninsula point road turn right over the railroad tracks
- keep to the left past the swing bridge
- parking is on the right side of the road
- there is a wall / dock area that we use as our entry point

by Bill Doran

Special Thanks To Norma Dickey

As some of you may know Norma has recently resigned as Director Membership Services. Norma has been a member of the OUC Board for a few years but her involvement with OUC goes back much further than that. More years than I – or probably Norma – care to remember. Norma was an integral part of the core of volunteers who helped make Underwater Canada the premiere consumer dive show in North America before the multi channel world and recession of the late 1990's made shows like Underwater Canada uneconomic. Her efforts were much appreciated by past Chairs of Underwater Canada and by past Boards of OUC. You will have seen Norma also helping out at the Outdoor Adventure Show and Treasure Hunt. She was also involved at start of the bingo and casino fundraising, which involved late nights in a very smoky atmosphere but generated much needed funding for OUC just after we lost our Provincial grant.

Even though Norma felt that she could not give the board her commitment it requires, she has continued to assist OUC with data entry. This is what makes the OUC a great place to volunteer, even after resigning people still want to help out and make the transition for their successors that much easier.

Norma, on behalf of the Board of OUC and the members I extend my personal thanks for all your years of service to OUC both at Underwater Canada and OUC itself.

*by Mike Briggs,
Past President, OUC*



OUC Board of Directors

President:**Raimund Krob**

Raimund.krob@sympatico.ca

President of Scarborough Underwater Club Inc until June 2005. a qualified PADI instructor and a previous OUC Regional coordinator for Central Region. OUC Safety Director since November 2003 and Acting President as of June 2005.

Finance Director:**Mike Briggs** (interim till replacement found)

Mikjudit@nb.sympatico.ca

Member of Toronto Super Turtles and the OUC since 1984. A qualified NAUI Divemaster since 1986, he has been involved with the OUC in many Board capacities since 1988.

Safety Director:**Ron Irvine**

Irvine@hp.com

A qualified PADI instructor and avid diver. Officially accepted the role of Safety Director in June 2005.

Membership Director:

Currently seeking to fill this position

Communications Director:**Chantal Gagnon**

Chantal-ouc@sympatico.ca

Member and instructor at the Ontario Underwater Explorer Club and pool coordinator at Dive for a Cure (Lillypad) 2001- 2003. A qualified PADI Instructor and co-owner of AAA aquasports inc.

Regional coordinators:**Doug Clarke**

EAST 1(for most of 2005) Currently seeking to fill this position

Diving since 1980 and qualified Divemaster since in 2003. Member of the Canadian Sport Divers Scuba Club for the past few years and currently holds the position of Past President. Also member of POW in Kingsnton.

John Raso

SOUTH

President of the Steel City Sport Divers Club. A teaching Assistant who has been assisting as a "Blue Shirt" pool helper. NAS-1 certified (Nautical Archeology Society). Also lending a hand to cover the West Region until a coordinator can be found in this region.

Dorine How

CENTRAL

Member of the Scarborough Underwater Club Inc. since 2004. NAS-1 certified in 2005

Ryan Vickers

NORTH

An active member of 4D Diving Club in Barrie, Ryan is passionate about all he does and wants to see an increase in youth participation in the organization.

CONTACT US AT:

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