

President's Corner

Fellow Ontario Scuba Community Members:

In this President's Corner I'm going to touch on a number of areas that I hope we have fulfilled our mandate to you in:

OUC Ice Floe Race 2008:

On Sunday, March 16th, half a dozen teams of divers kicked off the 2008 dive season in a very different way; they jumped into Peterborough's Otonabee River and raced ice floes downstream. Supported by a dedicated team of volunteers and cheered on by numerous spectators and curious onlookers, the racers navigated approximately 2.5km to the finish line. This year, the honours of fastest floe went to the Etobicoke Underwater Club's "Slush Puppies". Be sure to read more about the history of the Ice Floe Race later in this newsletter and look for more photos of this year's race on OUC's website at:

www.underwatercouncil.com



OUC @ Scuba World 2008:

From February 22nd to the 24th, more than eighty OUC Club and Commercial members did an outstanding job promoting the sport of scuba diving at the Outdoor Adventure Show. OUC coordinated the OUC Booth and the OUC Scuba Demo Tank in the "Scuba World" section of the show, where a record number of scuba clubs put on shows that engaged, educated, entertained, and excited the show's thousands of attendees about the sport of scuba diving.



OUC's Liability Policy for Scuba Clubs

All OUC Member Scuba Club Presidents agree that the single most valuable OUC membership benefit to them is OUC's Liability Insurance Policy for Scuba Clubs. Having Liability Insurance allows member Clubs to carry on their diving, training, and non-diving activities with peace of mind knowing that their Directors, their Instructors, their Dive Masters, and their members are all fully covered.

The policy is affordable (*about half of what it would cost to obtain on the street*), comprehensive, and included with OUC Club Membership. Also every year the policy is renegotiated to make sure it always meets OUC and Club needs. For example, for 2008 we increased coverage from \$2M to \$3M, confirmed and clarified both non-Member Volunteer coverage, and scuba equipment rental by member clubs to their members.

This means that a training Scuba Club with 100 members can get full OUC Membership benefits and comprehensive commercial liability insurance coverage* (for itself and all its Executive, Instructors, Dive Masters, members, etc.) for only \$2.6K per year.

And that a non-training Scuba Club with 100 members, can get full OUC Membership benefits and comprehensive commercial liability insurance coverage* for only \$2.3K per year.

We are often asked this question: "We're an OUC Member Training Club. Are our member Scuba Professionals (Dive Master and higher) covered under the Policy?"

The answer is "YES, of course!*" Dive Masters and Instructors who would normally have to pay between \$300 and \$400 per person per year for individual professional liability insurance, are completely covered under the OUC Group Commercial Liability Policy while they are training in an OUC Member Club setting. In fact, all they have to do is go online and request an electronic copy of the insurance certificate with their particulars listed on it (usually as an additional named insured) and then forward that certificate to their Certifying Agency.

*For a complete list of conditions, requirements, FAQ&A, and detailed documentation about the policy, please go to www.underwatercouncil.com and click through

Membership, Club Membership, and Liability Insurance.

In closing, I'm delighted to inform you that OUC is celebrating its 50th Anniversary in 2008. That's right, OUC was born in 1958 and that means we've been around half a century. Far from becoming antiquated however, I think everywhere you look you'll see signs of an organization that is re-inventing itself, providing better service to more members at reduced cost, at higher quality, and in shorter delivery times.

We've still got a ways to go though and ask for your continued support and patience as we rebuild. The OUC team (comprised of divers just like you) is strong, energetic, and passionate and is committed to serving you.

Yours in safe and enjoyable scuba diving,



Raimund J. Krob
President
Ontario Underwater Council

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OUC: Helping support and promote the sport of scuba diving in Ontario through safety, advocacy, cultural & environmental awareness, self-governance, education, and fun since 1958.

Welcome to our newest Members!

By Karen Theriault, OUC Director, Membership

Proteus Diving Inc.

Captain Frank Bird of the vessel Proteus runs out of Treasure Island Marina. His 55 foot long boat with a beam of 17 feet speaks volumes about the dive adventures that await your group!

Website: www.proteusdiving.com

E-mail: jpelletier1@cogeco.ca

Dive Tech Training Centre

Dive Tech is centrally located in Mallorytown, the heart of the 1000 islands. A full service air and gas station with a huge assortment of in stock dive merchandise.

Website: www.divetech.ca

E-mail: dan@divetech.ca

“Under Where?” Dive Charters

“Under Where?” dive charter captain Tom Scott runs 2 boats out of Brockville. Always friendly and at your service for all types of dive adventures.

Website: www.diveunderwhere.com

E-mail: diveunderwhere@hotmail.com

Lessons Learned from the Niagara Incident

By David Noble, OUC Director, Sport Safety

On September 16th, 2007 two of a group of five divers met a tragic ending while diving in the Niagara River and the Chippawa Creek (Welland River).

The OUC's mandate is to report on scuba incidents and provide initial recommendations to the dive community within 72 hours. In this instance, we had to revise our recommendations several times as more and more information became available.

As the dive site has for many years been a popular drift location, the tragedy has hit many divers and clubs very hard and many questions are being raised as to how it could have happened and how it could be prevented in the future.

To assist the community in dealing with this,

the OUC has developed a PowerPoint™ presentation which details the plan, the problems, the results and the recommendations. Recommendations are published in the OUC's Online Scuba Incident Report and are generally applicable to all diving situations, and follow good diving practices.

To date, we have presented at the OUC AGM, to the Ottawa Beavers Scuba Club, to the Niagara Divers Association, Scarborough Underwater Club Inc, Canadian Sub-Aqua Club, and St. Lawrence Charter Operators Association.

If your club or organization is interested in seeing this presentation, please contact your OUC Regional Co-ordinator or one of the OUC Board Members. Contact information can be found on the OUC website at

www.underwatercouncil.com

Former OUC President Passes Away

By Doug Rosser

It was with deep regret that the OUC learned that one of our long time members, and one of our longest serving Presidents, Beth Cornwell, passed away recently following a lengthy, courageous fight with cancer.

Beth was involved with the Council for many years in a number of volunteer capacities, and if there was an OUC event running, you could be sure to see her there with a smile and a greeting for every diver. Beth began her "official" involvement with the Council's Board in the early 1990's with her election as Central Region Representative.

During this time she also took on the responsibility of overseeing the Council's Bingo license - an important position as Bingo in those days raised a considerable amount of money to support a variety of diving related activities, including the air test program.

Beth was elected President of the OUC in 1995, a position which she proudly maintained until 2001 - a span of six years. During those years, Beth provided leadership to the Council as it faced a number of extraordinary challenges. It was during this period of time that the OUC became ineligible for direct provincial government funding and Beth,

along with her fellow Directors, had to determine how to scale back the organization and survive on significantly less annual income. One of those consequences was a dramatic downsizing of the office staff and operations. As the decade drew to a close, significant changes in the Canadian diving industry, and the contraction of the diving manufacturers and distributors forced the Council to re-evaluate how it could maintain its flagship event - Underwater Canada.



On the positive side, Beth recognized the need to significantly upgrade the Council's air test equipment and led the process to obtain a Trillium Grant from the province to purchase much-needed, state-of-the-art air testing equipment which allowed the OUC's program to maintain testing to the CSA standard.

Beth was a devoted diver who gave to the Ontario sport diving community much of her life and love. She is survived by her husband

David (who for many years was also our chief air testing coordinator) and daughter, Erin. To her many friends in the diving community she will be fondly remembered and sadly missed. She was one of those special people who represented the best of those volunteers who preceded her and continued the legacy of strong volunteer leadership that has helped the Council continue for more than half a century.

History of the Ice Floe Race

By Raimund Krob

The annual Ice Floe Race has been, and continues to be one of Ontario scuba diving's most beloved annual events, and has given thousands of divers and spectators memories to last a lifetime.

Here's a bit of that 49-year history courtesy of a recent interview I had with Faye Head, long time Trident Underwater Club Member and Ice Floe Race supporter:

Faye wasn't even a twinkle in her parent's eyes (does the name Archie Ballantine ring a bell with anyone?) when the Ice Floe Race was born in 1959.

Panoramio



Big Archie

Photograph by [av8orca](#)

3 Km from Lakefield, Ontario (Canada)

But in 1974, when she first took up diving at the tender age of 14, she heard the story about how the race got started from Trident Underwater Club members Al Konopchinski, Ted Baker, and Al Hocking. And she clearly remembered thinking that those guys must have been pretty <insert your choice of colourful descriptive language here> to brave the fast-flowing icy water in only sealskin suits.

Sealskin was what they called neoprene rubber that was smooth on the inside and the outside,

and you used to have to talcum-powder yourself from head to toe in order to put on a sealskin wetsuit. Sharkskin (smooth on the inside, and checked on the outside), didn't arrive on the scene until a few years later.

Anyways, back to Faye's story:

Apparently the Ice Floe Race got started entirely by accident on one beautiful spring morning way back in 1959 when a bunch of Trident Underwater Club divers decided to go for a nice refreshing dive in the river. But when they got there, they found that the water was flowing too fast and was too covered with ice blocks to dive. Not wanting to waste the opportunity to get wet, they decided to grab hold of some of the ice blocks and drift down on top of the river instead of under it.

They had a lot of fun and although there is no documented historical record about this, one can easily imagine that after their drift, they might well have recounted their experience while rehydrating (very important, even back then) over a few cold ones at the local watering hole.

Nothing happened the following year (1960). Faye seemed to think that it might have been because the river was frozen solid (which was the cause of the 2007 race being cancelled), but in 1961 a few floes with a few divers each did go down the river. The course at this time was further north, closer to Lakefield.

And then in 1962 a Trenton team (not the Flying Frogmen of CFB fame) became the first team to be invited to take part in the event. It wasn't so much a race back then as an excuse to have fun and get together and enjoy the camaraderie of fellow divers and friends. But, as often happens, camaraderie can grow into

good-natured competition, and good-natured competition can grow to all-out competition in a surprisingly short span of time. And so the "race" part of the Ice Floe Race was born.

The race grew steadily over the next few years, attracting scuba clubs and divers from increasingly further and further distances.

Then in 1974 the Ice Floe Race got its first really big boost when an article about the race was published in Playboy magazine. The article caught the attention of the Explorer's Club of Pittsburgh, a radioactive bunch of scuba divers, rock-climbers, and sky-divers, and as a result they decided to come up in 1975 and investigate this strange Canadian phenomenon first-hand.

Their scouting party must have thought it was pretty cool because they returned in 1976 with a men's team (dressed as cavalry) AND a women's team (dressed as Indians) no less. And for years after that, nobody personified the spirit of the Explorer's Club of Pittsburgh's better than the (now late) Jack O'Hare.

And the race grew. Saturday night buffet & dance, post-race awards for not only fastest time, but also for most unique costumes, club participation, furthest distance travelled, best Ice Floe Race T-shirt design, most unique method of propulsion, door prizes, etc.

During all this time Faye's responsibilities grew with the race. In the 70's, as a youngster, she ran messages between the Molson's van, the Registration desk, and the Starting Line, and over time, she went from running messages to helping run the event as Co-Chair and Chair between 1988 and 1996.

And one year in the early 1980's, Faye recalls the Ice Floe Race recording it's biggest year ever with more than 750 divers in the water racing, and more than 1,500 people in atten-

dance for the Saturday night buffet & dance.

After that, Ashley and Stephanie McBride took over the Race for a number of years, and the procession of floes bearing costumed divers, strange contraptions ranging from pedal-operated wings, waterwheels, and giant divers continued. And on more than one occasion, a bagpipe was used (that would have been Todd Shannon Senior) to help propel a floe down-river (either that or scare the other ones away) all the way from start to finish.

Between 2002 and 2004 the race languished as Trident Underwater Club slowly dissolved, but then in 2005, the Ontario Underwater Council asked Trident for permission to keep the Ice Floe Race alive.

Trident agreed and today the race has very much returned to its earlier roots.



This year's Ice Floe Race took place on Sunday, March 16th, and 6 teams and more than 100 racers and volunteers participated.

The Kawartha Branch of the Canadian Diabetes Association were the beneficiaries of this year's race and were on hand to gratefully accept all donations of clothing and textiles to their "ClothesLine" program.

We look forward to OUC Ice Floe Race 2009 and invite you to join us in the fun!

My Trip To Bonne Terre Mines

By Richard Carr
Barrascuba Underwater
Club

There were three of us heading to Bonne Terre, Missouri to go scuba diving for the weekend. We all met at Doug's place in Hamilton to start the 13 hour journey Thursday after work. We loaded up my wagon and headed towards Sarnia for the first leg of our trip. It was cold and snowing. The trip threw the night was uneventful and saw us in St. Louis for breakfast. After food and fuel, we headed out again. Nearing our destination, we then missed our exit, so we continued along Rout 44 spotting several signs for the Meramec Caverns in Stanton, Missouri. This was the hide out of the famous outlaw Jesse James. These caverns have a rich history going back to the civil war and were used for large parties by locals as they can hold hundreds of people just in the ballroom. These caverns also house the worlds largest stalagmite. The guided tour takes you on lighted paths back along an underground river into different rooms. Well worth the detour, this tour was an enjoyable bonus to the trip.

After checking the map we headed back country through a national forest towards Bonne Terre. Arriving mid afternoon we checked into the dive centre at the Mines entrance in the middle of town. Room keys in hand, we headed to the hotel just a couple of blocks away. Arriving at the hotel I was immediately impressed, it was a turn of the century train station, fully restored to it's original charm. All three of us were housed in one large room on the second floor. Beautifully furnished with antiques, the all wood room was spacious with high ceilings and fantastic mouldings. Opening the steel doors to the bathroom I was delighted to be looking at the original solid brick vault with arched ceiling. After having a well needed nap, we headed out for a steak dinner and beverage.

Our diving experience began after an early breakfast the next morning. We met in the dive centre to check in and to watch the mandatory safety video. The video is dated but you can't dive without watching it, no matter what your diving skill is (don't even try to get

out of it!!) After a thorough dive brief we donned our gear and headed down the "mule shaft" into the darkness of the mine.

The sloping shaft has had stairs installed in some areas to ease the short hike. Some think there are too many stairs (around 100).



OUC Member Elaine Elliot at the Key Hole at the Bonne Terre Mine in Missouri.



**The Stairs
at Bonne
Terre
Mines**

get lost in the maze of columns and walls. I found myself looking away from the flashlights enjoying the contrast between the darkness and lit columns. For safety, each diver has a coloured glow stick attached to them. Staff carry different colour sticks to differentiate themselves from the group. At the end of the dive there is a secured safety stop rail to hang on to and submerged stairs to make exits

When diving here, they supply the tanks, as they do not want you carrying yours down the mule shaft. (again, no option of your own tanks, their liability over-rules you).

Heading down the stairs into the darkness you start going around a curve entering a huge cavern. Following the correct trail brings you onto a large staging area, diving platform and boat dock floating on 160 feet of crystal clear 62 Deg. F. water. As you look out over the underground lake into the cavern you see endless columns that seem to go on forever. Mined for over one hundred years for lead and silver there are five interconnected storeys of caverns totalling approximately 1 mile across, 2 miles long and nearly 300 feet from bottom to top.

There are about ten different established dive routes each increasing in difficulty. As a first time diver on route one, you are lead through large open caverns into connecting rooms. You can see these amazing pillars come up from the depths breaking the surface of the lake, reaching far above to the smooth ceilings and supporting the town above. Lighting of the caverns is well done adding to the beauty and mysteriousness of the place. For everyone's safety, only the dive master and safety divers can carry flashlights, as it would be too easy to

safe and easy.

With an underground fill station supplied from above the tanks are easily made ready for the next dive without removing them from the BCD. Leaving your gear on the platform it is only a short hike to the surface for a break in the warm Missouri sunshine.

A large deck in the centre of the compound has a pleasant view of the historical mining village sitting under large century old hardwoods is available for use. All around you are displays of mining equipment from the years gone by offering a sense of the rich history and food for the imagination. There is also a heated building available for cold or rainy days.

Dive lasts approximately 45 – 60 minutes depending on air consumption, most dives are 30 – 60 feet deep. Over the weekend, you will do 4 dives, each a different route. Additional returns will offer more routes with increasing challenges like longer overhead passages (but everyone in your group must have been there before).

During the course of the weekend the dives will supply you with a variety of interesting, if not spectacular experiences. Submerged equip-

ment, reverse waterfalls of bubbles, natural beauty from mineral deposits, low over-heads, darkness and the maze of the structure supply something for everyone.

The mines offer an array of courses from beginner open water to advanced cave diving, night navigation (they just have to turn off the lights in the daytime).

They are a very safety oriented group, and are a pleasure to dive with.

There is so much more that we could describe, but you have to see it yourself.

Richard Carr
Barrascuba Underwater Club
Hamilton Downtown YMCA
Hamilton, Ontario

Contacts:
Bonne Terre Mines Diving
West End Diving (headquarters in Bridgetown, MO)
info@westenddiving.com
info@2dive.com
www.2dive.com
314-209-7200
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Safety - Maintaining your Equipment

By David Noble, Director of Safety

Raking up the yard? Washing the windows?
Cleaning the garage?

Welcome to the annual spring cleanup.
When was the last time you had your equipment checked out? Last spring? 2 years ago? Never?

Well now is the time to ensure you are ready for another year of diving. We do a lot of things because it is that time of year but equipment maintenance is sometimes forgotten. It is important to remember that we do not breathe naturally underwater and that we are solely dependant on our equipment to allow us to enjoy this underwater realm.

Things to do:

- Regulators - in to your Local Dive Shop for a tune-up / check mouthpieces as well
- Tanks - in for annual visual inspection (check Hydro dates too)
- BCD - check inflator / deflator for leaks,

ensure hoses, clamps are secure, ensure dump valves are tight, working properly (not sticking open/closed) , ensure dump pull strings are not frayed, cummerbund and retaining clips are not broken / working properly, Tank strap not frayed / buckle working

- Mask - Straps not torn, nicked or broken, adjusters working, Skirt not leaking, no pinholes, purge works
- Fins - Straps not torn, nicked or broken, adjusters working, no cracks, splits, etc
- Drysuit - Inflator working, Deflator(s) working, and tight, Does it still fit (remember the holidays!!), Leaks?
- Wetsuit / hood / gloves / booties - Does it still fit (remember the holidays!!), Tears / leaks / etc
- Weight belt - still fits?, Correct weight?, Strap not frayed?, Buckle not broken (remember when you drove the snow blower over it?)

Always ensure your equipment is properly maintained.

Shipwrecks 2008 is April 5

By Barb Marshall

On Saturday, April 5, 2008, the Niagara Divers' Association is hosting its 14th annual Shipwrecks Symposium in Welland, Ontario.

An event attended by hundreds of divers annually, this year's show has something for everyone, with seven primary presentations by internationally renowned speakers, loads of free door prizes, and lunch and refreshments included. Speakers will meet with guests during breaks and lunch, and display areas are located throughout the lobby for non-profit diving related groups and organizations.

Master of Ceremonies – Tom Wilson

Bernie Chowdhury – Controversial War Wrecks of the Orkney Islands / Scapa Flow

Bernie is a popular and accomplished speaker, as well as author of the best-selling "*The Last Dive*". Featured in Bernie's presentation will be the remnants of the German World War 1 High Seas Fleet at Scapa Flow, as well as video and slides from his fourteen trips to the Orkney Islands, now restricted by British Parliamentary action.

Jill Heinerth - Explore

An award-winning filmmaker, Jill wrote, produced and appeared in *Water's Journey*, the PBS documentary through the world's greatest water systems. She contributes writing and photography to National Geographic, Smithsonian and dozens of diving publications. Her passion for exploration has taken her from remote Siberia to inside Antarctic icebergs, and she will take the audience on a multimedia tour of places no-

body else has seen before.

David Gilchrist – Ontario's Popular Paddle-wheel Shipwrecks

David has been a presenter at numerous shows, and has had photographic exhibitions featured across Canada. David will present three popular wrecks accessible to recreational divers: the *Comet* and the *Cornwall* near Kingston, and the *Rothersey* in the St. Lawrence near Prescott.



David Trotter – Cutting Across Time – 30 Years of Adventure

David is a renowned shipwreck discoverer, deep diver, author, lecturer and photographer. From discoveries in the 70's to his most recent new discoveries in 2007, his show will delight historians, shipwreck divers and adventurers.

Valerie and Jack van Heest – She Died a Hard Death – The Sinking of the Hennepin

Valerie and Jack have explored and documented shipwrecks for over 20 years. Valerie has written and directed more than a dozen documentary films and published two books. Their extensive

research and diving of this pristine wreck has culminated in the nomination of the *Hennepin* to the National Register of Historic Places.

Tom Kowalczk & David VanZandt – Anthony Wayne – New Discovery

Tom and David will present on the discovery of the *Anthony Wayne*, believed to be the oldest steamboat shipwreck in Lake Erie. On April 28, 1850, one of the most significant losses of life in early steamboat history occurred when the starboard high pressure boilers exploded, killing an estimated 38 passengers and crew.

Niagara Divers' Association – Chippawa Investigation

On September 16, 2007, a group of five divers visited the Welland River, which flows into the Niagara River at Chippawa. That day, two divers lost their lives. The area has been visited and dove without incident by literally thousands of divers over the years, but there are several areas and conditions (man-made and naturally-occurring) in these rivers that can make diving extremely dangerous. Although not shipwreck-related, the Niagara Divers' Association feels an obligation to supply the available facts on the accident, as well as hazards at this dive site, which is located in the middle of the Club's base of operations.

For full details on the show, directions and accommodation information, visit the Niagara Divers' Association website at <http://www.vaxxine.com/nda> and follow the links to Shipwrecks/2008, or call Barb Marshall at (905) 382-2389.

OUC Members Dive and Save Lives

By David Black

Over the Family Day Long Weekend OUC Board member Elaine Elliot, a professional paramedic and her diver husband Richard Carr who are also volunteer fire fighters were involved in the rescue of nine year old Victoria Spidel, who had crashed through a concrete cover and free-fallen about 20 metres into a well.

Elaine and Richard who live nearby quickly arrived on the scene and made contact with the frightened young girl.

While Elaine called down to her, Richard donned his drysuit and prepared to rescue Victoria.

Her left arm was broken and she was partially submerged in the frigid water. She was still conscious and clinging to a steel pipe

Richard was lowered down to the little girl where he manoeuvred Victoria onto his lap and they were brought up together.

Haldimand fire Chief Rob Grimwood said Carr, Elliott and other members of the rescue team will be formally recognized for their heroic efforts.

Great job Elaine and Richard!!!



Elaine Elliot and Richard Carr, OUC members and volunteer firefighters



Karen Theriault, Membership

As some of you may already know, I have taken the position of Membership Director. I am the youngest on the OUC director board, even if that may seem intimidating, I am excited about my new position. With that being said, I'm also very new at the workings of OUC but learning as much as I can as I go along. My first task that I was asked to tackle was the revamping of the Club Membership forms. After a grueling few weeks, we finally got it done! I believe that it was a success, since the feedback has been good thus far.

Currently, I am also helping with this year's OUC Ice Floe Race (which I hope everyone will be participating in). As never been to an Ice Floe Race, I have been relying on the stories and memories of other OUC members to get a feel of what to expect on the day of the race. I must say that I cannot wait for this year's race and hopefully be able to be a participant. This year's beneficiary is the Diabetes Association, Kawartha branch. Diabetes is a disorder that hits close to home, as it runs in my family. Millions suffer from this disorder, and yet there is no cure. The 'Clothesline' program, set forth by the Diabetes Association, helps fund research in the fight and cure against diabetes. We ask that all who comes to the Ice Floe Race donate any new or gently-used clothing or textile, to help such a worthy cause.

On my stay as Membership Director I look forward to meeting the clubs, individual members and commercial members that make up OUC at many of our events (like Scuba World or Ice Floe Race) and throughout the dive season!

David Taylor, Finance Director

I am a new millennium diver, did Discover Diving in February 2000 in St Maartens, came back and got certified and then eventually progressed to rescue diver. I have just passed the 500 mark, about half warm and half cold.

I started diving with Hamilton Area Divers Association and I'm now a member of the Niagara Divers Association and the Hamilton Chapter of Save Ontario Shipwrecks. It's a great way to meet divers interested in marine archaeology.

I was persuaded to be the Central Region representative not fully appreciating that it meant that I also became a director. SOS is the coordinator for the Nautical Archaeology Society courses in the province. NAS 1 courses are run by the chapters but require a marine archaeologist to do the teaching. Unfortunately our archaeologist, Erika Laanela, resigned last year in order to return to school to a PhD. So far we have been told by someone in the Ministry of Culture that there is some hope for a replacement this summer.

To run NAS we needed insurance and I became the liaison between SOS and OUC on this matter. So it is not too surprising that I was asked to fill the spot of OUC Director of Finance last November. I am slowly getting to grips with all the files. This is made somewhat difficult by the fact that they all reside at the Sport Alliance of Ontario in Toronto and I am in Hamilton. Lots of emails. So far there does seem some room for improvement but then I am not yet fully aware of all the constraints.

In my other life I am a retired Physics professor at McMaster University, still teaching one senior level course in the fall term. That way I clear to go south any time during the winter, no longer constrained to study week.

Next on the rebuilding list: Individual and Commercial Membership

By Raimund Krob

As most of you are aware, OUC has been in rebuild mode for the past couple of years, and we'll likely continue in that mode for at least another year or two until we've accomplished what we set out to do. Rebuilding efforts in 2006 and 2007 were focused on our Safety Program (#1 priority), our Air Purity Inspection Program, restoring financial health to the organization, rebuilding the Provincial Regional Coordinator Team and the Board of Directors, and Club Membership. With those

largely successfully completed, we can now turn our attention to Commercial Membership and Individual Membership. Our value proposition to Commercial Members is a good one, but we have a lot of work to do to clearly communicate that message. Our value proposition to Individual Members while still good, needs to be improved, and that will take quite a bit of effort and time. It is extremely important for us to do this however, as the majority of scuba divers in Ontario today do NOT dive in organized leader-lead groups, but in self-led individual groups. Please stay tuned for further announcements!

Mission Possible - OUC Directory Update

Marianne Collins
Etobicoke Underwater Club

The mission, as I have chosen to accept it, is to integrate the OUC Membership database with the OUC Scuba Community Directory. The single source database will be efficiently updated and maintained, to the benefit of all its viewers. This message will not self-destruct in 30 seconds or anytime soon.

With OUC now entering year 3 of a 5-year rebuilding program and with a new Membership Director working on restoring Commercial and Individual Membership, it seemed a good idea to me, to offer the kind of assistance I am employing as the Etobicoke Underwater Club's membership director. EUC has long been a strong OUC supporter, since its inception and is always keen on contributing resources to sustain its health.

The Scuba Community Directory currently lists Ontario Scuba Retailers, Scuba Charter Operators, Scuba Clubs, and Scuba Agencies. It is kept current on a roughly bi-monthly ba-

sis and enjoys tens of thousands of downloads from the website, per year in both pdf and excel formats. Thousands of hard copies are distributed at events like Scuba World 2008, at NDA's "Shipwrecks", at UHMS Diving & Medicine Symposiums, at the OUC Ice Floe Race and through OUC member Clubs.

Joining the Community Directory to the pre-existing Membership database will streamline the updating process and consequently advance the accuracy of all the data. The behind-the-scenes process will be transparent to viewers so there will be no disruption in service. Indeed the only visible manifestation might be some revision to the look of the Community Directory spreadsheet. These changes will be introduced over the next several months and throughout the dive season. Scuba community businesses, organizations, and individuals listed in the Directory can help by notifying the OUC of any additions, changes, or deletions.

Dive for a Cure

By Brian Pallock

Is SCUBA diving your passion? Have you ever thought to promote your passion while also helping others?

For the past two years local divers and volunteers in Whitby Ontario, have come together to share their interest in scuba diving while raising money for a worthy cause.



The event is called “Dive for a CURE” and is modeled after the successful Canadian Dive for a Cure event that ran from 2001-2003 in Etobicoke, Ontario.

This event was not a “dive-a-thon” type fundraiser for certified divers only, but rather a pairing of volunteer staff from the local dive shop (Dive Source Scuba) who came together to share their love of diving through a discover scuba experience that would raise money to help find a cure for Cancer.

Each participant pre-registered and donated \$40 (or often more) to the Canadian Cancer Society while Dive Source Scuba generously covered all costs, donated the gear and coordinated the staff and resources needed.

The night began with each group of participants arriving at a pre-booked time. They were

greeted by volunteers from Dive Source who checked them in and gave them their “Boarding Pass”. This confirmed they were registered and allowed them to move through the different stations of the event as well as assure they received proper training.

Their first stop on their “boarding pass” was the classroom where they settled in for a presentation about diving by two scuba instructors who reviewed the basics including what they were going to be doing in the pool.

From here the excitement was building and it was time to get wet, so bathing suits were donned and off to the pool they went. Here they checked in again and were brought to the in water instructors who would be taking them on their first underwater adventure.

After some hands on training and a few nervous giggles, each person descended below the surface and had their first taste of scuba diving where they discovered the joy that comes with floating weightless and breathing underwater.

As they got comfortable with their new underwater skills, each group continued on to tour the pool and play special underwater games and puzzles and the only problem seemed to be



the occasional mask leaking from the huge smiles that were taking place!

Eventually time was up as it was the next groups turn to get wet, so it was time to move back to the regular world above the water.

Smiles abounded as each person got dressed and on their way. The atmosphere was charged with laughter and talk about the wonderful underwater experience and many people also shared personal stories about family members who struggled with Cancer.



This evening was a huge success for everyone who participated with over 70 people signed up for the event, which lasted over a four hour period. The participant donations combined with a raffle draw in December at Dive Source allowed this years Dive for a Cure to raise over \$6,600 for the Canadian Cancer Society.

This event truly shows what divers and their friends can do when working together for a great cause and allows a community to share in a common goal as well as a sport that is all about discovery and fun – Scuba Diving!

If your local dive shop or club is interested in planning their own event, please contact Dive Source and/or Dive for a Cure as they want to share the power of this event with others. Note that the associated charity can be one of your choice.

For more information:

www.diveforacure.ca or e-mail scuba@divesource.com

Event History:

Dive for a Cure is a scuba charity event that originated at Lynnhaven Dive Center in Virginia Beach, Virginia USA. Paul D. Davies brought Dive for a Cure to Canada in 2001 & over 3 annual events raised almost \$250,000 CDN proving that “Together We Can All Make a Difference”.

**Museum of Ontario Archaeology presents:
“The Edmund Fitzgerald; the legend lives on”**

**Saturday, April 18th, 2008
In London, Ontario**

Full-day event.

See <http://www.uwo.ca/museum/events.html>
for details about event, pricing, times.
Tickets are limited so don't delay!

OUC Treasure Hunt taking a deco- stop in 2008

Back in late 2007 when we were doing our planning for 2008, we canvassed our membership to find out which OUC-coordinated events they were planning on supporting in 2008.

We received strong support for the Ice Floe Race and Scuba World, but only lukewarm support for the Treasure Hunt, so we decided to give the Treasure Hunt a rest this year and we are looking to substitute something new in its place.

DIVER

THE LONGEST-ESTABLISHED SCUBA DIVING MAGAZINE IN NORTH AMERICA

DIVER Magazine Offer for OUC Members

DIVER Magazine and OUC are pleased to announce an exclusive offer to all OUC Members:

OUC Members can now take advantage of a \$21.00 rate for a 1-year subscription to DIVER Magazine, a \$5.25 savings over the regular \$26.25 rate.

Here's how:

1. Go to DIVER Magazine's website at www.divermag.com and click on "Subscribe/Renew" in the left-hand frame.
2. Select "OUC (Member # Required in Comment Box)" from within the "Choice" window
3. Enter your payment information.
4. Enter your OUC Membership Number into the "Comments:" window

IMPORTANT: Your OUC Membership number must be entered in exactly the way it appears on your membership card, all 7 characters, including the dash (or hyphen). Your OUC membership number is case-sensitive, so the first 2 characters (usually an "I" and an "N") must be in upper case.



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