



Dive Log

February Newsletter

Dive Log

Activities

Feb. 20: Speakers
Kevin Brook/ Mike
Michaelson Dive Trip

March 20: Speaker
Amy Parker Express
Travel

March 8 - 9:
Sea Rovers

April 17: Marc/
Christine Presenta-
tion on Scuba
Equipment

May 15: Speaker
Michael Lodise Back
Scatter East

June 19: Speaker Jeff
Ryan and Dan
Bradley

July 13: Chicks Day
Stage Fort Park

July 17: TBD

July: Fish Count date
TBD

Aug. 16: Lobster Fest
Kevin Brook's House

Aug. 21: TBD

Sept. 18: TBD

Oct. 16: TBD

Oct. 26: Pumpkin
Carving at the
Kadaras'

Nov. 20: TBD

Dive or Don't Dive By Mark Bowers

We all know what it is like to go diving. Well ahead we make a plan, simple or elaborate. The day of diving we meet and drive to the dive site. We evaluate conditions. We do our dives. We return home and wash our gear. This day's dive would prove much the same except getting up before the sun in January, the temperature was in the low teens and it is a 2 1/2 hour drive, an hour longer than going to Cape Ann. The variables may be different but the process is the same as any other dive day.

Whatever the variables, we had a plan. The three of us, Jeff Goodreau, Ryan King and myself, joined up one Saturday morning last month to do some more exploring in the quarry. I picked up Jeff and we were on our way to meet up with Ryan at the quarry. We of course had to stop at one of our favorite diners for breakfast on the way. Winter diving is always better with a full belly, as good as the hash is, it is usually best to pass on this before diving.

On the ride we fine tuned our dive plan, talked about future dives and managed to joke a little too. We knew it would be the water temp that likely limited us today and not me. The reason I might have been the weak link for a quarry dive is I am on open circuit scuba and Jeff and Ryan are on rebreathers. Following the "Rule of Thirds" and assuming everything were to go right for the depth we planned I would have had enough gas for about a 90 minute dive with the required reserve. Jeff and Ryan on rebreathers could stay at least 3 to 4 hours longer than me.

As I stated, it would be the cold that would limit us on this dive and not the open circuit diver.

None of us realized how true my previous statement would be. We arrived at the quarry 10 minutes early and Ryan was already there. Ryan was making the best of his time by getting some work done. I guess one has to love technology. We were in the "boondocks" and Ryan was connected and working from his laptop. Ryan had to finish up what he was doing so Jeff and I decided to walk our deco/bailout bottles to the entry point. It is a very short walk, even with the snow only about a minute. Jeff and I joked about something as we walked to the air shaft. Our mood was certainly upbeat! I was a little ahead of Jeff when I turned to see the water we had expected had changed state. It was no longer the cold, clear liquid we had anticipated but now was a clear solid. We stood there speechless, about 3 feet above what was supposed to be water staring at the ice. We both must have looked like 2 kids that had lost their puppy.



We were able to break some of the ice. This did show some promise but both Jeff and I were already silently contemplating, do we or don't we. Before going any farther we decided to get Ryan and take a look at the larger open part of the quarry. As we neared the normally open portion looking through the trees we could see this section of the quarry had changed states too. There was only one small unfrozen section of water at the head wall with no way of climbing out there. Now the three of us were now sharing the thoughts we had to the question, do we or don't we.

We walked back to the air shaft discussing the pros and cons of diving or not. Back at the air shaft we stood on the wall and broke some more ice. The three of us stood there and shared our thoughts. Ryan spoke first. He began his statement with, "as long as there are no problems". Jeff shared his concern on the possibility of the ice sheet moving on top of us once submerged. I looked up at both of them and said "that's 2 reasons not to dive". That was enough for me. I said we should pass on diving today. We all rather reluctantly agreed. We picked up the equipment we had carried over and went back to the trucks.

There were several factors in making the decision not to dive. Yes, a major part of our decision came from our experience and training. Another factor was that with the exception one small area with no exit possible, nearly the entire body of water was frozen. The last factor was the three of us looking, almost starring, at the broken ice floating on the surface and thinking that really, really looks cold.

The question was, now what do we do? Jeff mentioned checking out some other pits that should be nearby. So off we went, with technology literally in Jeff's hand. He had maps and locations in his phone. Ryan followed us in his truck. Jeff led us to an area where these pits should be. We likely drove over somebody's front yard on the way. Remember, this is Vermont a front yard is measured in acres. To avoid the possibility of angering the land

owner we turned around and parked in a field well away from the house.

We walked to where we thought was our best chance of locating the pits. Jeff's estimates were spot on. The pits were right where they should be. We located several pits and actually measured depths of the ones that had some open water. One was completely frozen so measuring the depth of this one will have to wait.

After almost 2 hours of exploring we walked back to the trucks. We talked about the logistics of diving our new targets once spring arrives. Notes, both mental and electronic were made. We made note of both vehicle access, entry/exit points and parking. We looked at and shared the pictures we had taken. Before we parted ways Ryan had a Google Earth map with details on it emailed to Jeff and I. We were not as far from civilization as we were at the quarry but it is still pretty impressive we had access to all the world's technology.



Our day proved not to be a waste at all. We were very happy and content with our discovery. We did not get to explore underwater but we did explore. We located a new place to dive, a new place to explore. It is very likely we will be the first to dive here. To dive someplace that few have or no one has before is becoming less of an opportunity as time goes on. Now all there is to do is wait until the ice is gone and get in the water before the black flies.

Photos by Jeff Goodreau

A message from our president...

Hello fellow divers!

First, let me thank everyone that attended the January meeting. We don't get much diving in during these cold winter months, so it's nice to meet with fellow divers and plan for the soon-to-happen warmer weather and water. There was some cold water diving activity happening this past month, so perhaps we can hear all about it during the next "dive talk". The BOD has been active planning events and speakers – trying to fill the calendar with dive activities. Rich will be discussing these at the next meeting, so be sure to stop by the front table to have a look at the signup sheets. We're always looking for ideas and suggestions – so be sure to share yours with any of the BOD members, or add them to the "suggestions box".

Think warm weather, warm water, great dives...

Looking forward to seeing you all at the next meeting...

Ken





Don't forget to visit!
<http://www.uniteddivers.org>

For suggestions and/
or contributions to the
newsletter, Please
contact Liz Blair at
riccilily@gmail.com

About Us

We at United Divers strive to promote the sport of scuba diving in a positive way. We are committed to educating our membership through the use of guest speakers, dive instructors, and club members. At each of our monthly meeting we have a special feature that we hope is interesting and entertaining.

For the newer divers, we offer both shore dives and boat dives. On these dives we have experienced divers act as their dive guide. Diving with experienced divers is a great way for a newer diver to "learn the ropes" without going through the frustration of learning the hard way.

For experienced divers looking for more than the typical shore or boat dive, the club organizes more challenging dives. We work on ideas that challenge the skills of the experienced diver and provide them with an enjoyable experience.

Non-members are always welcome to attend our monthly meetings and activities. Meetings are held once a month, on the third Thursday of each month.

Please feel free to stop in to a meeting, or if you would like membership information, please contact our [Membership Coordinator](#).

Find us on [Facebook](#)
Search for "United Divers of Central Massachusetts"

Monthly Meetings: 6:30 pm on the 3rd Thursday of
each month at
SLATTERY'S, 106 Lunenburg Street, Fitchburg

February's Guest Speaker
Kevin Brook/ Mike Michaelson
Live aboard dive trip

See you on Feb. 20!!!