

AQUANEWS

www.rocklandaquanauts.org

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March, 2002



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From the "Kinda" Rectangular Office near the Sand of the President of the Rockland Aquanauts

Capt. Tony Piscitelli

Hello again from the Rockland Aquanaut leadership group. I would like to start with a big thanks to both our general membership and your Board of Directors. At the last general meeting both the membership and the BOD unanimously voted to incorporate and get club insurance....."an idea whose time has come....." to quote Victor Hugo. This will open up new areas for the club (see the article re the Feb meeting notes). Let it suffice to say that we can now proceed to be a dive and diving club.

Well for the main thrust of the article.....a two parter...let me begin with some personal reality. The dive season is soon upon us, and are you in shape to be diving? The reason for the query is self evaluated and my answer to me....honestly is a resounding no....This reality hit home recently on numerous occasions..... when I got measured for my new DUI 200FX, when I got winded running to catch a plane, when I looked in the mirror, and fore mostly, reading the news and the particulars of a mega lawsuit in the death of a Cincinnati diver vs. a Rockland Aquanaut friend, the Seeker. To compound this consternation, this is the first time since I know my dive buddy, and long time friend Vinny Galle that he is in better shape than I am....Vinny..... I'm proud of you and you last night at dinner have inspired me to get back my Paradise Lost..... so to speak. So besides getting the gear

ready, the regs tuned, the adding and subtracting of bits and pieces to my rig, I will start, as of this writing to regain the physical condition recently abandoned. Yes I will be in-shape for the 2002 dive season....And this message to you on being fit to dive my fellow RA's will be my contract with myself. Hopefully you are in-shape or you will do the same and get there as soon as possible.

Part two of this month's message is a rather sticky issue in that it deals with BTS. I am caught in the middle of what I feel is a not so amiable place to be. At one point in my life I had taken a very active role in BTS and enjoyed every moment of it...and due to personal issues on the home front gave up that spot...in hind site probably a mistake. Be that as it may, I personally see a great value in BTS and applaud the efforts of Zig and his crew for all they have done for the dive community on a worldwide, national and especially local basis. If you will, it is the hub (along with the Boston Sea Rovers) at this point of the Northeast Dive Community.

The other side of the issue as I see it (just my opinion at this point, and only my opinion) is the way the Rockland Aquanauts and BTS has interacted in the last few years. Not a very positive experience. This I would imagine, is why we as a club have opted not to participate in BTS this year.

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AquaNews

The official publication of the Rockland Aquanauts. Written contributions & photographs are always welcomed & encouraged. Submit materials for publication by the 24th of the month to:

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Next Meeting: Thursday March 14, 2002

7:00-9:00 pm at the West Nyack Free Library

65 Strawtown Road

West Nyack, NY 10994

Phone: 845-358-6081; www.westnyacklib.org



Please Note!!

Due to a date conflict with the library, we will not meet on the 2nd Tuesday as usual this month. Instead we will be switching to the 2nd Thursday, hopefully for the last time. The program will be Eileen Sappah and Dave Swope showing slides of their dive trip to Belize. More info below.

Directions:

Thruway from Tappan Zee Bridge

Get off at West Nyack Route 303 exit. Make a left hand turn; get into the far right lane and turn onto Snake Hill Road. Follow Snake Hill Road until you come to the reservoir at the end of the road. Make a left hand turn onto Old Mill Road and follow it until you come to a 4- corner stop sign intersection. Make a left hand turn onto Strawtown Road. The library is located 3/10s of a mile on the right at the intersection of Strawtown and Demarest Avenue.

Thruway from Harriman

From the New York State Thruway, take Exit 13S (Palisades Parkway South) to Exit 8W (Rte 59W). Take Rte 59W to Rte 304N. Take 304N to West Nyack Road which is the first light. Make a right onto West Nyack Road. Proceed to the fork and bear left onto Demarest Avenue. the library is located at the intersection of Strawtown Road and Demarest Avenue. The entrance to the parking lot is on Demarest Avenue.



March Program

Did you ever dream of being on your own Caribbean island with only the sun, wind, sand and seas as your entertainment? Where the locals serve up excellent meals, provide lodging next to the water, and take you diving three times a day? Where there are no radios, no TV's, no news about wars, crime or declining stock prices? Where dressing up for dinner means changing to your "new" bathing suit?

Eileen and Dave found such a place in Belize this past January. And, while they did share the island with 26 other divers and fishermen, they got to experience some of the best diving and hospitality available in the Caribbean. They will share their slides and pictures at the March meeting.



We Need Your Help!

Paul Galeazzi, Jr.

As a Not for Profit Organization, we need your help in order to help protect our most precious resource, the underwater environment. Some people do not realize that water is a non replaceable resource. Every drop of water in our world is the same drop it was when our earth was formed. The only difference is that the water quality has been decaying drastically over the last century.

It doesn't matter whether it is fresh water from our lakes or reservoirs, or salt water from our oceans; we need to do our utmost to clean out non decaying debris. Besides the fact that the pollution poisons our water, many things like plastic bags kill many fish. The fish think the plastic bags are jellyfish, a source of food for them, which they then eat and can not digest.

While performing these environmental cleanups we not only need divers in the water, we need surface support to transfer the garbage to bags for disposal. We also need help getting divers in and out of the water, since many of the areas are not easily accessible.

You can also help with a **tax deductible donation** in any amount or form. Whether you can physically help or you can help financially Please Help.

Thank you,

Rockland Aquanauts Organization Inc.
Post Office Box 387
New City N.Y. 10956

Savvy Diver Tip Equalizing Every Time

Failure to equalize properly can end your diving career. Due to both the anatomy and physiology of differing air spaces in people's heads, the ease of equalizing varies greatly among divers. Keys to equalizing include:

- * Practicing equalization gently on the surface while preparing to dive.
- * Equalizing on the surface just before your descent.
- * Equalizing gently, early and often during the descent; not waiting for pain or discomfort.
- * Use the easiest and gentlest equalization technique that works for you. Some divers hold their nose and blow, others snort into their masks, some swallow, others yawn, and a few just wiggle their jaws or exhale against their tongues.
- * If you encounter problems, ascend a few feet and gently try again. (From Rodale's *DepthFinder*)

Welcome New Member!

Welcome to the newest Aquanaut, Joe Radomski. Joe lives in the Bronx, NY. Joe is a certified instructor specializing now in tech diving specialties such as nitrox, trimix and rebreathers. Joe will be participating in several of our organization's dive plans this year. We are also working with Joe to see what advanced diving education opportunities might appeal to the Aquanauts.

Another of Joe's skills is that he is a gifted computer geek!. Joe has jumped in and taken on the dauntless task of becoming the Aquanaut webmaster. Welcome, Joe, and thanks for the help.

New Web Site

Speaking of Joe's Radomski's efforts, please go visit the new improved Aquanaut web site. Right now, It is available at <http://www.rocklandaquanauts.org/index2.htm> while under construction. Joe is trying to gather all the information that our members, friends and prospective members might want to know about Aquanauting. Up-coming dives, meeting plans, past and future parties, old newsletters and lots of images of past events. We always welcome your suggestions for content and your photos. Any one contributing more than four photos will get their own page. Please keep watching the web site for all the Aquanaut news.

Pay your Dues, Get a BTS Floor Pass

How are you doing on those New Year's Resolutions? Have you stuck to them? Are you losing weight? Are you going straight home from work? Have you paid your Aquanaut dues?

Collecting dues is one of the unfortunate necessities of club life. Since we don't qualify for a federal grant, we need your dues, which were due January 1. The sooner the better. Only \$42 for a full year of Aquanauting. If you pay soon - like on or before March 14 - you are entitled to a free ticket to the Beneath the Sea Exhibit floor. We are also working on this year's dive subsidy program and hope to make it attractive to more than the northern diver. All intended to give you value for your dues.

Please send your dues to Paul Galeazzi at the PO box noted elsewhere in this newsletter. Or, better yet, bring a check or cash to the March 14 meeting.

President's Message

Continued from page 1

I have listened to RA's BAM (Bitch and Moan) about being treated like dirt, overworked, and under appreciated by those at BTS. My initial encounter at BTS left me with the same feelings, and yet I saw a merit to the group and the event that got me to come back.

I have heard how RA's were accused of misdealings at the silent auction table, even after it was ascertained that another "club" did the nasty deed. I had to listen (with rage welling up inside me) about a nondescript and from what I can tell a low level assistant BTS worker bad mouthing us as a club while on vacation in the Dominican Republic, not knowing he was in the presences of a RA BOD member and first hand participant at BTS during the alleged BTS show last year. I guess he must have heard it from up on high. And I must add that we do not deserve to be dragged in the mud, at least not "behind our backs". Question....why didn't we hear from Zig on this at the time? This is the story as of this writing.

What it boils down to is that both BTS and the Rockland Aquanauts lose out. This is a sad comment, for personally I strive in all my dealings for a win-win scenario. This now is a LOSE-LOSE. It also goes against my grain and rubs me the wrong way because I am committed to support those who support diving and in particular those who support the Rockland Aquanauts...and this of course is BTS. Enough said on this issue. If RA's want to continue to work at BTS please do so, but on a personal basis.....contact Capt. Dave Swope so he can get you into the BTS program.

In signing off.... we would like to see some new faces or old faces (Peggy Howland) participate in the leadership of the club, the newsletter and the web page..... You as Rockland Aquanauts bring much to the table, so please share this with all of us. **This is a new day, and we want you to be an active part of the Rockland Aquanauts.**

It is **OUR CLUB**, so please participate. This is a great time to be a Rockland Aquanaut. **And, I again extend the invitation to be an active Rockland Aquanaut on land, and under the water, wherever you may chose to be diving.**

.....As always and for now, be present, dive safe, dive responsible and always support those who support the Rockland Aquanauts.

Thanks for the opportunity to be your President.

Capt. Tony

General Meeting Recap February 21, 2002

At the last general meeting of the Rockland Aquanauts some monumental issues were discussed, and voted into Rockland Aquanaut history.

After a long discussion of the pros and cons a general consensus was polled of the club members in attendance. The membership at large unanimously voted to incorporate, as well as to obtain general liability insurance coverage. The Board of Directors then proceeded, to also vote unanimously to incorporate the club as a 501-C-3 not for profit entity, and following this vote the second vote was cast and also unanimously decided by the BOD to acquire insurance for the club.

What does all this mean in a nutshell:

- We now have a legal entity called the Rockland Aquanauts.
- We now will carry group insurance for our general protection.
- We can now fund raise and offer tax benefits for those who contribute to our cause.
- We can now have our dues be a tax deduction. We can organize and have our own trips and outings as a club.
- We now have the infrastructure in place to again have our own club boat.

This is just a broad thumbnail sketch of what we will be getting re benefits of incorporation and insurance. There will be a complete disclosure of all aspects of both Incorporating and Insuring.

Also discussed was BTS and why we were not participating as a club this year; to wit, basic and general lack of interest to commit to a BTS work schedule, not enough club participation in manning our own booth, and the negative posturing by a BTS worker about the Rockland Aquanauts performance last year while on a dive vacation in the Dominican Republic. It was also stated that some RA's will still be participating at BTS as individuals and if any RA's wanted to continue to support this effort they should contact Capt. Dave Swope either by phone or Email.

Further discussions revolved around a group discount club sponsored dive trip, a club journal, website advertising, dive store discounts for RA's, also of note by consensus the members felt that we did not need to have our meetings at a bar or restaurant, and all but one in attendance preferred to be in a library type setting. The West Nyack Library offered us the site of this meeting again and at the next BOD meeting we will further discuss the options.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30.

Respectfully submitted, Capt. Tony Piscitelli, President

Diving with the Aquanauts 2002

The 2002 dive season is starting to come together. Mike Hatala, our dive coordinator, has assembled a team with diverse diving interests to create opportunities for just about everyone. The focus of this schedule will be on local diving in the tri-state area. Steve Hausch will be publicizing some of the weekday dives available out of Belmar, NJ. President Tony will be focused on the some of the Long Island south shore diving being offered by some of our favorite captains and speakers. Vinny Galle will be working on getting us wet in Long Island Sound with Capt. Noel. You missed diving with Jerry Gherardi in the Bahamas. But the trip to the St. Lawrence Seaway is still open (see article on page 6). Melissa Bogen and Les Parker have invited us again to visit them for a day of diving and picnicking at Walton Lake on June 15.

A unique opportunity for Aquanauts is doing the clean up dives in Hessian Lake. Mike Hatala has secured the following dates for us to dive Hessian Lake at Bear Mountain State park as part of our ecological objectives. . Start time for all dives is 9:00 AM.

- Saturday, May 18th Annual RA Picnic
- Sunday June 23
- Saturday July 27
- Sunday August 25
- Saturday September 28
- Sunday October 13
- Lake Welch - T.B.A.

If you have a particular dive destination in mind for this summer, let Mike know. If it's wet enough and at least waist deep, some Aquanaut will join you there.

New Jersey Symposium March 22, 2002

Want to get into a diving mood before going to Beneath the Sea? The American Littoral Society will conduct 2002 Annual New Jersey Symposium on Friday evening, March 22 7:30 - 10:00 pm. A reception will be held prior to the 8:00 pm program. The symposium will be held at the Sandy Hook Theater, Sandy Hook, NJ. The program will include:

EAST COAST ODYSSEY Think you know the East Coast? Come explore an area that doesn't suffer from summer traffic jams. Herb Segars, diver and noted underwater photographer, will take us to amazing underwater realms -- manatees, whales, and sea urchins for a start, brought to life by Herb's striking photos.

EPICURE'S DELIGHT :New York oysters were on everyone's plates; then the conditions of the NY Harbor deteriorated and the oysters all but disappeared. Michael Stringer of NY/NJ Baykeeper will speak of the Oyster Restoration Project and how you can be involved in restoring these illustrious bivalves in the most urbanized estuary in the Country.

Admission is \$10 per adult, \$5.00 for students; kids under 12 are free. To order tickets - Send in your name and address plus how many adults, students and children that will attend plus your check for the correct amount. Enclose a self addressed stamped envelope for your tickets to be sent back to you.

American Littoral Society, Sandy Hook, New Jersey 07732.

2001 Was Bloody, but not a Record Year for Shark Attacks

Shark attacks in waters off the United States increased by 1 to 55. Florida, which leads the nation, had 37, 1 less than in 2000, said George Burgess, who heads the research center.

"Last year was anything but an average year, but that's because it was more like the summer of the media feeding frenzy," Burgess said.

Most of the injuries were minor. But shark attacks figured prominently in media coverage for weeks, intensifying in July after an 8-year-old was attacked by a bull shark in the waters off Pensacola. The shark bit off Jesse Arbogast's right arm, but the boy's uncle wrestled

the shark out of the water and retrieved the arm, and surgeons reattached it. However, severe blood loss left the boy brain damaged.

Weeks later, a 10-year-old boy was fatally mauled in the Virginia Beach surf. Two days after that, a shark killed a man and gravely injured his girlfriend off a North Carolina beach.

Burgess said the gradual upswing in attacks over the past decades is due to humans spending more time in the water and more reliable reporting when there is an attack. (Copyright, *The Associated Press*)

Drive to Dive: Brockville, Ontario, Canada

by Jerry Gherardi

Ask the average diver the question "Where's your next vacation destination"? No doubt you will hear everyplace possible from Maine to the Florida Keys, to the islands of the Caribbean and the vast stretches of distant Pacific atolls. Ask the average Aquanaut, and I assure you we Aquanauts are anything but average, and the immediate response is, "Some sort of wreck destination?" It would seem we're some sort of special breed of explorers, crawling and picking over the ghosts of shipwrecks past. Be it wood, steel, or even concrete, wire dragged or nearly intact, shallow or extremely deep, we RAs have a dive team up to the task at hand. But seldom will you hear the one foreign wreck destination chock full of wood and steel wrecks just waiting for our explorers: Canada.

If a country has to have neighbors, and most do, we here in the lower forty-eight are doubly blessed. Mexico to our South has the warm gin-clear waters of Cozumel, but mention the word Canada, a mere 6-hour drive to our North, and visions of polar bears or chilling "Antarctic Lows" come to mind. Yet nothing could be further from the truth. Yes, there are polar bears, but you're not going to drive to see one, and yes even the citizens of Bayonne have chilled to the bone during one of the many winter "Arctic blasts" wandering down the lower Hudson Valley. Winter, the ultimate bane of divers.

So let's direct our attention to that part of Canada most like our own Eastern United States: Ontario! And rush forward to the season of choice, Summer. And with a little fine diving tuning, to the city of Brockville. Last April, Peter Ventoutsos presented at a Rockland Aquanaut meeting a program entitled "The Best Fresh Water Wreck Diving Around," during which he extolled

the merits of diving the Saint Lawrence Seaway. Ever since then, I have been itching to see if the allure of 60 feet+ vis, with no thermocline, and splendid wrecks mostly intact, could be mine for the driving. So I did my research off season and set up a long weekend 2002 trip for my friends.

This July (12th thru 15th) I am planning that long weekend away, destination: Brockville, Ontario, Canada. I have located a willing Brockville dive shop (Diver's Paradise) and secured special features for our diving pleasure (later start time, wet gear storage, etc.). Working with the fine folks at Diver's Paradise (Mike & Debra) we are in the process of securing special divers' discount pricing at the nearby Best Western Motel.

Due in part to favorable weather and the extra hardworking, but much maligned zebra mussel, Mike claims vis to exceed 50 feet, and water temps in mid-July to exceed 65°F with no thermocline! He's talking just 3-mm wet suit diving here, surface to stern at 100 feet.

Add in a supply of just-waiting-to-be-explored wrecks at various depths and a crew of hardworking, fun-loving boatmen, & a hefty currency discount, and this package sums up to a deal hard to beat. So if you're inclined to join me and my merry band of wreckers, come to the next meeting, or send me an e-mail to Jerry at info@rocklandaquanauts.org

PS: Brockville is small town in Canada with a limited number of rooms and boats. If you snooze you'll lose on this one! This sort of adventure makes an ideal "do it yourself" weekend (sans the special dive shop features) for just about any weekend during the summer dive season.

BROCKVILLE ONTARIO CANADA

Fresh water wreck diving on the St. Lawrence

Friday to Monday July 12th to July 15th

Come join the road trip to Canada this summer!
A quick drive North and you will experience Eastern Canadian hospitality!

Diver's Paradise Brockville's only year-round dive shop will be our dive guide to the wrecks of the St. Lawrence. Two days diving, two tanks per day, \$80.00 (USD). Full service shop with long summer hours.

Call today with credit card in hand and reserve your spot: 613-342-4692. After you give Mike & Debra your experience level and depth comfort zone, ask them about their "Special Divers' Discount Package" for the Best Western Motel.

NEWS FROM THE 'NET

The theme this month is
**Liveboards and Dive
Cruises**

<http://www.aggessor.com>
The Aggressor Fleet, Eleven
World-Class Liveboards

<http://www.nektoncruises.com/> Nekton Dive cruises, Now there are two!

<http://www.peterhughes.com/> Peter Hughes Diving,
World-Class Liveboard Diving Throughout the World

<http://www.mikeball.com/> Mike Ball Diving Expedi-
tions, Diving "Down Under"

<http://www.exploreventures.com/> Explorer Ventures
USA, Liveboard diving in the Caribbean and Australia

<http://www.manthiri.com/> Manthiri, The Queen of
Maldives Liveboards

<http://www.aquacatcruises.com/> Aqua Cat Cruises,
Liveboard Dive Cruises from Nassau, Bahamas

<http://www.bilikiki.com/> Bilikiki Cruises, The Premiere
Liveboard Operator in the Solomon Islands

<http://www.palausecuba.com/> Explorer LiveAboards,
Palau's Affordable Liveboard

<http://www.trukodyssey.com/> Odyssey Adventures,
Truk Lagoon, Micronesia

<http://www.seafever.com/> Sea Fever Diving Cruises,
The Best Diving in the Bahamas!

<http://www.naia.com.fj/> Nai'a Cruises , Fiji's Finest
Diving

<http://www.coralstar.com/> M/V Coral Star, Live
Aboard diving and fishing in Panama

<http://www.blackbeard-cruises.com/> Blackbeard
Cruises, Diving in the Bahamas

<http://www.truthaquatics.com/> Truth Aquatics, Diving
in California's Channel Islands

<http://clavella.com/> Clavella Adventures, Diving in
British Columbian waters



Savvy Diver Tip How To Ascend Safely

Control your speed. While ascending, hold your inflator and console in front of you and slightly above your head. Keep an eye on your console and on your bubbles simultaneously. Watch both to monitor your ascent rate. Your bubbles will help to indicate how fast you are ascending and they'll keep you oriented. Your other hand should be prepared to bleed air from your BC, if necessary. (From Rodale's *DepthFinder*)

DEMA 2002

A wave of scuba divers will splash into Las Vegas, Nevada for the grandest industry trade show of its kind – DEMA Show 2002. The Diving Equipment and Marketing Association (DEMA), the world's leading trade association and resource for the scuba diving industry, is pleased to announce that planning for its annual trade show, taking place October 22 - 25, 2002 at the Las Vegas Convention Center, is well underway with numerous new business programs & exciting events scheduled for what will be the first fall DEMA Show. See <http://www.dema.org>.

Beneath the Sea 2002

The largest consumer diving event in North America, BTS's 26th Undersea Exposition and Dive Travel Show will be at New Jersey's Meadowlands Exposition Center in Secaucus, NJ March 22nd, 23rd and 24th.

Advance tickets can be obtained by contacting one of the following:

Phone: 914-664-4310; Fax: 914-664-4315

E-mail: info@BeneathTheSea.org

<http://www.BeneathTheSea.org>

Your E-Mail Address Needed

If you have given in to the dot.com era, you could be eligible to receive a Jerry-gram. All we need is to know your e-mail address and you will know even more about Aquanaut activities than you get from reading this newsletter. No jokes, no chain letters, no nasty viruses. Just all the newest news about our club. So, test out that cyber name you dreamed up and send a note to trvlguys@optonline.net. Then get ready to be informed beyond your wildest dreams.



Rockland Aquanauts
Post Office Box 387
New City, NY
10956

Mailing
Address
GoesHere

Dive in Canada

2002 Dive Schedule

BTS Tickets

NJ Symposium

****Next Meeting****

Thursday, March 14, 2002

7:00 pm at

West Nyack Free Library

65 Strawtown Road

West Nyack, NY 10994

(845) 358-6081

****Eileen & Dave Swope****

****Diving Belize****