



Battlefords Scuba Community

Fall 2022 Newsletter # 28

The Prez Sez

Dennis McCullough

Another dive season done, and we can look forward to a hot holiday or a long winter broken up by the occasional pool dive. Or maybe we can do something else to challenge ourselves. Whatever we choose we should grow with it, expand our horizons, push the envelope or some such idiom. I think the pandemic brought new realizations to us that we can do things in different ways, ways we never thought of ten years ago and that we can do things we never thought from the comfort of our homes.

One of our members, from an interest in navigation, has expanded his world into the stars and delights in sharing his viewings of celestial bodies and imparting some of his knowledge to those who are interested. Another acquaintance has undertaken to put her pandemic musing to paper and print an inspirational manuscript to give to her friends. Others have availed themselves of tools such as webinars and videoconferencing to take part in new courses or to update old ones. A few years ago, Adele and I discovered The Great Courses, a company offering thousands of courses of hundreds of subjects available in a variety of formats conducted by renowned professors from universities around the western world. Countless hours were spent considering topics from The Black Death through Natural Wonders of the World to Oceanography and in between touching on art, music, astronomy, physics, and psychology to mention a few. The message I take from this is that no one is too old, or too smart, to undertake something new – to try. It may not turn out to be everything you hoped for, but you gave it a try, and no one can ask for more.

This applies to diving as well. The Open Water Scuba Diver course is the first step in learning to dive, and many of us stay on that step for the rest of our diving lives. That is not bad in and of itself, but there is so much more to diving that we can try. And sometimes we do get to try it without everything that might make it more enjoyable, and we miss some of the good parts of that dive. The underwater world is so very different at night, and not necessarily dark and frightening, but it is so much more enjoyable when we know how to use the lights to see and signal and what the safe practices are. It is reassuring to dive with the comfort of knowing how to navigate accurately so we can go out and back or make a triangle and wind up where we started rather than worrying about making a long surface swim to get back to the start point. We've all heard stories of newly certified divers being taken to depths of over one hundred feet or into cenotes in Mexico with no training. Some of those divers tell stories of the anxiety of

being “way too deep” and not knowing what to do or being scared of what may happen if they lose their way in a cenote.

We can all expand the horizons of our diving so that we are more comfortable doing those many “neat” things that are available to us as divers – cold water diving, deep diving, wreck diving, cave diving, ice diving and even technical diving. There is much different equipment out there but some of it requires special training to use it safely. Later in this issue we will talk about insurance issues that relate to some of these ideas, but we can get ahead of the curve and prevent ourselves from becoming a statistic or a near miss. Let’s get trained and do it but do it well for our own sakes.

BSC News

MEMORIUM



It is with sadness that we mark the passing of one of the original club members, Wilda O’Brien. Wilda came to us at age seventy-nine, wanting to learn to dive. She convinced her physician, who thought the sport was for younger people, to sign off on her medical, and she convinced her family to go along with her wishes. Wilda worked hard to manage the equipment – her arthritis made it challenging and she did complete her knowledge development and confined water sessions but decided that the water here was too cold for her bones and that she did not want to travel to a strange place to do the completion dives.

However, she took a trip with an archeological group to Greece and found a dive shop that, with her paperwork in order, took her into the sea to swim with the fishes. She was delighted, and delightful! And this was at eighty-three years of age.

Wilda was very active in the Order of the Eastern Star and with the hospital visitations. For her 90th birthday, Wilda went sky diving – indomitable or what?

Wilda fought a long battle with cancer, but she always had a smile and a story to tell. I never heard her complain – she would rather laugh it seemed.

Our thoughts go out to her family in this time of loss. We will miss you, Wilda!

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Battlefords Scuba Community would not be able to do much of what it does without the generous financial assistance of several organizations. We gratefully acknowledge that assistance which has made this club one of the leading forces in diving in Saskatchewan.

In the 2022 operating year, the club received two grants from the Battlefords Agency Tribal Chiefs to assist with the Discover Scuba for High Schools program. In the spring we received fifty-eight hundred dollars, and this fall we received eighty-seven hundred dollars which enabled us to open up two hundred spaces for senior high school students in the west central and northern regions of the province to try scuba diving at no charge to them.

The club received in excess of fourteen thousand dollars from the Saskatchewan Underwater Council to defray the cost of the pool rentals in the 2021 – 22 year, the costs of the club's website, and the costs for two people to attend PADI Instructor Development Courses and Instructor Exams, one of whom is now completed and the other was deferred for health reasons.

The club has just been informed that it was granted another three thousand dollars for the Discover Scuba for High Schools program, this from the 2018 Saskatchewan Winter Games Legacy Fund. This will open up about another fifty spaces for the students.

Just a note of interest – the club, since its formation in 2008, has received in excess of seventy thousand dollars in financial assistance from the BATC, the City of North Battleford, the Town of Battleford, the SaskTel Foundation, the Saskatchewan Underwater Council and now the 2018 Saskatchewan Winter Games Legacy Fund. The funding from the Town and the City comes through Sask Lotteries funds made available to the local governments. The Saskatchewan Underwater Council receives much of its funding through Sask Lotteries via the Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation association. The Legacy funding is derived from the surplus created by the 2018 Saskatchewan Winter Games held in North Battleford. We appreciate the support of these agencies and thank them sincerely.

TROUBLES IN THE WORLD OF DIVING

Many of the readers will have heard some rumblings of Instructors having difficulty with the Professional Liability Insurance. Others will have read or heard about lawsuits involving scuba divers. There was an excellent article in the summer 2022 issue of Diver magazine (which members receive as part of their Saskatchewan Underwater Council membership. The article is good reading for any diver, let alone instructor.

One of the points the author, Steve Lewis, makes is that the insurance companies are claiming to be losing money as the number of lawsuits rises, and the amount of the lawsuits increases. He cites standards as one of the weak points in the system but also says that the standards as they are written are not the crux of the matter. He points to the laxity with which the standards are viewed by divers, shops, and instructors and makes the very strong case that everyone is responsible for the situation in which we find ourselves.

It is easy to point a finger at shops and instructors. Completion of a certificate relies on mastery of the required skills. The skills are listed for each dive of each course. Mastery, in my mind, is performing a skill in a fashion that fulfills the stated purpose of the skill and in a way that is repeatable and demonstrates control and confidence. If the performance does not meet those criteria, then it must be repeated until the standard is satisfied. The instructor is required to document the completion for his/her records (or those of the shop) and to keep that documentation on file for the legally required time. This is intended to avoid the situation where an individual can claim not to have been taught a particular skill in the event of an incident and a resulting court case. I am sure there are circumstances where the requirements are not met be it in the teaching, in the mastery or in the record keeping. That can be problematic for instructors and shops.

There can be problems with shops and instructors putting divers in situations for which they are not prepared. I recall stories of divers doing their first completion dive being taken to depths of 80 to 100 feet whether intentionally or by accident. Is this not an accident looking for a place to happen – task overload, confusion, gas narcosis and a host of other complications? Divers can be complicit in some of these situations through maintaining their silence about not being prepared for or being uncomfortable with the situation. Divers have the right to speak up (or signal up if already in the water) to make it known that they are not prepared for the conditions of the dive. It is more than a right – it is a RESPONSIBILITY.

Unfamiliar equipment can be problematic. Diving in open water with a dry suit can be interesting, to say the least, if there has been no orientation in confined water where one learns to deal with excess air in the legs and feet, or the lack of insulation if the inflator hose has not been connected. Most BCD's have the familiar large hose and valve mechanism on the left shoulder, but have you tried the newer ones with a small lever (button) mechanism on the lower left portion of the main body of the device? Do you remember the dump valve on the right side back of the BCD that enables you to release air in the head-down position? If you are not familiar with the equipment presented to you, it is your responsibility to ask questions. If you are not comfortable with the way the equipment seems to be working, it is your responsibility to

bring it to someone's attention or to sit out the dive. It is better to ask or to complain than to become a statistic, and only you can ask your questions.

Rental equipment can also be a problem. Faulty valves can lead to the auto-inflation of one's BCD or dry suit and completing a dive with the inflator hose disconnected can lead to an unpleasant dive and potentially a disaster when the surface is reached, and one expects to push a button and be buoyant. A malfunctioning regulator may leave a diver or the buddy in a very unpleasant situation. How many of us have quietly accepted sub-standard equipment from a resort rather than raise an issue?

Personal equipment can be a problem as well. How many of us dive with a redundant computer in case the primary dies during a dive? How many of us have a save-a-dive kit and how many jerry-rig a solution to an equipment problem? When was your regulator last serviced? Did you know that the inflator valve on your BCD should be serviced regularly? How many of us take the time to plan a dive in any detail or do we just rely on the computer to tell us how long we can stay? I am sure that most of us have arrived at a dive site to find some piece of equipment missing or not working properly – what happened to checking the functioning of the equipment before packing it for the dive?

However, there is another area where problems occur and that is, in my mind, the most common contributing factor – the diver. As an instructor, I admonish every student to practice the skills they learn in each course or they will lose them, to complete a refresher course after any long hiatus (six months or more) from diving. When was the last time you practiced the controlled emergency swimming ascent with your buddy? When was the last time you, as a Rescue Diver, practiced the recovery of an unresponsive diver underwater with the rescue breathing and removal of equipment. When did you last do actual underwater navigation rather than letting someone else do it? Do you do a pre-dive safety check before every dive? In doing refreshers, I often get a blank look when I mention the controlled emergency swimming ascent which is followed, after a demonstration, by the lightbulb look and subsequent comment to the effect that "I have not done that since my course". Practice of the many and various skills involved in diving does not require an instructor. Certified divers can help each other, or they can ask more experienced divers for help so long as it is not a new skill that they are learning. This is part of the fun of having a club – there are other divers there with whom to share experiences and knowledges. The OWSD course is geared to certify divers who can be independent (not solitary), who are knowledgeable and confident in the conditions in which they were certified and in which they have progressed with their diving.

Often, in the deeper investigation of dive incidents, the proximate cause is not the root cause. A diver may have drowned but it might then be found that the SPG on the scuba unit was not working, a factor that might have been discovered during a pre-dive safety check. A tired diver with buoyancy problems can usually solve some problems by inflating the BCD or dropping the weights, but if he or she has not practiced the skill, especially in a stressful situation, how successful will that person be?

One of the points Steve Lewis makes is that, while most of the certifying agencies have a quality assurance department, those departments have difficulty ensuring the standards are met. Logistics alone make this a daunting task. How are they to check on the performance of all the shops and all the instructors to see standards are being met? So little lapses become a routine part of the operation and gradually become accepted practice in that circumstance. We as

divers may get a random questionnaire about a course we completed, but do we take the time to complete it and return it? We are the conduit between the events as they happen on the front lines and the theorists in the ivory towers, and sometimes this communication is interrupted. How are those in high places to know what is happening in the remote (to them) locations if we leave them in the dark?

The point I am trying to make here is that each and every one of us has a responsibility to try to make things better in the diving world. Do the pre-dive safety check. Practice those skills we do not use regularly. Communicate our concerns to someone in a position to do something about them. Say no if we do not feel safe with the conditions surrounding us. Do refreshers after long breaks from diving. Update our knowledge through reading and new training. Stay fit to dive. The list goes on and on.

If we continue down this road of acceptance of mediocrity, leaving it to the other guy, and complacency we are likely to find the insurance problem will get worse and we will have fewer instructors and diving will be more difficult to get into. And there is always the spectre of some government level saying to divers "if you can't regulate yourselves and be safe, we will do it for you" with the resultant licensing of certified divers before they can dive within that jurisdiction.

An excellent way of looking at what we do in our diving is to dive with new buddies every so often. Sometimes, they do things a little differently which can be refreshing. Sometimes, they stress other aspects of diving more strongly than we do. Sometimes, they question what or how or why we do things a particular way or they may make us question ourselves. None of that is wrong and we should learn from the experience. Getting out to events held by other clubs or by the SUC will do the same thing for us. We can never have, as experienced divers, too many options so long as we have thought them through and given them a try.

If we all do our part to take care of ourselves, then we could see a lot fewer incidents and fatalities. Diving could become safer if we all look after our own buddy team and use the skills, we have been taught rather than letting them rust away in the dank recesses. Let's shine the light on all the skills we have as divers and keep them sharp. You never know when we may be called upon to use them, and it would be too bad if we had forgotten.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Tracy Wilson on achieving Instructor status with not one but two organizations. Tracy was awarded a scholarship from the Women Diver Hall of Fame this past spring and she used this to undertaking earning her Instructor rating with the Handicapped Scuba Association. She followed up on this by completing her PADI Instructor Development Course and Instructor Exam in Edmonton, funded in part by the Battlefords Scuba Community with grant monies from the Saskatchewan Underwater Council. While completing the IDC and IE, Tracy also earned twelve Specialty Instructor ratings. There was a great deal of effort and time put into this undertaking and Tracy has earned our admiration. You can expect to see her teaching some courses for the club in the next little while. Well Done Tracy.

As well, Tracy is the 2021 – 22 winner of the Len LaFreniere Memorial Trophy for outstanding contribution to the BSC. Well done Tracy!

Congratulations also go out to Brad Nelson who earned his Instructor status with the Handicapped Scuba Association. Brad has been an Instructor with PADI for a number of years. Expect to see Brad doing some teaching with the club over the next few years.

The stories these two have to tell about their adventures on the Handicapped Scuba Association course is entertaining to say the least.

Well done both of you!!



A Scuba Story in 3 Parts

PART ONE

Sometime around the Summer of 2021, I was approached about going to Ottawa to take the Handicapped Scuba Association's Divemaster certification. Always ready to tackle a new challenge, I was all in! Brad (Nelson) was going to complete his HSA Instructor certification, so it seemed like the perfect opportunity for us to get started

sharing our love of scuba diving with people who were unable to complete mainstream scuba certifications.

The Handicapped Scuba Association (HSA) is (as the name says) focused on scuba diving for people with disabilities. They offer several courses including Introduction to Scuba Diving, Open Water Scuba Diver, Advanced Scuba Diver, Skin Diving and Snorkeling. They also offer a Dive Buddy Program that provides training for able-bodied divers who will be a dive buddy to a disabled diver. Unlike mainstream scuba certifications (such as PADI), HSA offers multi-level certification. This multi-level certification means that the scuba diver may be certified as a completely independent diver, or they may be required to dive with an able-bodied buddy who can assist them. For example, someone with PTSD may be a fully independent diver; a blind diver may be able to complete all the skills independently but would require someone to guide them in the water; and a quadriplegic diver would require assistance to complete some of the skills and would therefore require more assistance from their dive buddy.

After completing my PADI Divemaster certification and while waiting for an HSA opening in Ottawa, the Women Divers Hall of Fame launched applications for their annual scholarship program. Looking through the various scholarships (and thinking that I really didn't stand a chance), I found the Hugh Fletcher Memorial Disabled Diver Training Grant. This grant was set up to cover \$500 USD for training and \$500 USD for equipment for the successful recipient. I felt it was a good fit for the HSA training I wanted to do.

I had been an Associate Member of the Women Divers Hall of Fame (WDHOF) for a couple of years at this point and even received my pin (this is a pretty big deal) in November of 2019 in Orlando. I was also one of only a few WDHOF Associate Members in Canada. I was still hesitant to apply because these are some exclusive scholarships, but I decided I had nothing to lose by submitting my application.

I was shocked and on top of the world when I was awarded the Hugh Fletcher Memorial Disabled Diver Training Grant that I had applied for!!!

In April 2022, Brad and I travelled to Ottawa to do our HSA courses with Hubert Crétien and Freedom At Depth. To my surprise, the Divemaster course was the exact same as the Instructor course. I was also excited to learn that once I completed my PADI Instructor certification (I was registered to complete this in August 2022 – more on this later), I could fill out the paperwork to upgrade to an HSA Instructor with no additional training.

We spent 4 intense days in the classroom and the on-site pool. The classroom was focused on the multi-level certification and on a comprehensive review of a wide range of disabilities, their implications, contraindications, and special considerations for diving.

The pool sessions proved to be both intense and challenging. Not only did we each have to learn the skills and adaptations for various disabilities as instructors, but we also

took turns simulating being a student who was a paraplegic, then a quadriplegic, and finally, a blind student. My favorite memory of the class was when I was simulating being a paraplegic who was also a right arm amputee and then I had to do the mask remove and replace skill. As an able-bodied person, this task really put things into perspective!!

PART TWO

Fast forward to August 2022. With funding for completing my Open Water Scuba Instructor (OWSI) certification generously provided by Battlefords Scuba Community (via the Saskatchewan Underwater Council) I loaded up my dive gear and headed off to Edmonton for 10 days to complete the PADI Instructor Development Course (IDC). I had previously completed the IDC e-learning and unit exams. Working with Ken Holliday and Laura Vilneff of Northwest Scuba I made my way through the classroom portion of the IDC covering PADI Standards and Procedures, Learning, Instruction and the PADI System, Business Management and Diver Safety, Business of Diving and Marketing Diving. Confined water skills were done in the wave pool at West Edmonton Mall's waterpark. Open water components were completed in Lake Summerside.

The 10 days were intense and exhausting. Having done my previous training with the Battlefords Scuba Community, I did not have the experience that an active dive shop would provide. I was confident with my in-water skills and presentation/teaching abilities, but I was less comfortable with the components of the written exam. While others in the IDC were going to practise their open water skills, I stayed in the classroom to do more practise exams.

To receive the referral to write the Instructor Exam, we needed to achieve a specified score on a series of confined water teaching exercises, open water teaching exercises and classroom teaching presentations. These came fairly easily to me. The referral also required us to achieve a minimum score of 80% on a practise standards exam and a minimum score of 80% on a practise theory exam.

PART THREE

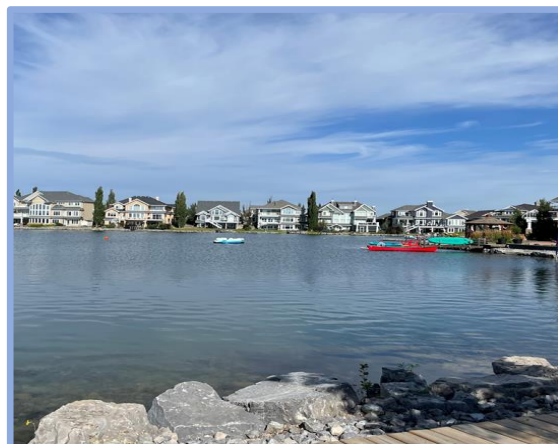
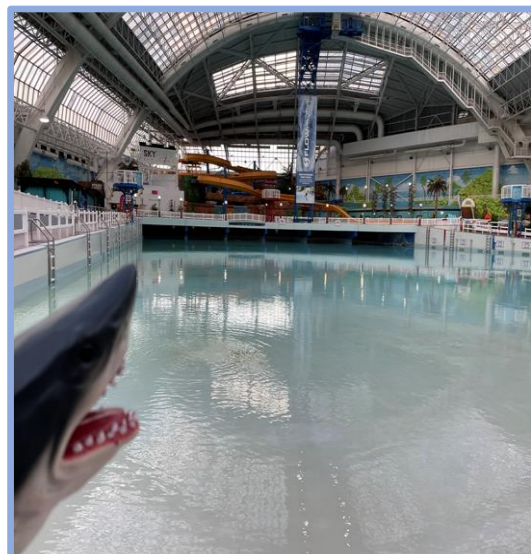
The Instructor Exam (IE) was held on the two days immediately following the completion of the IDC. The IE consisted of completing an open-book PADI Standards exam, a closed-book written Dive Theory exam, a prescribed classroom presentation, confined water teaching session and open water teaching session.

The PADI examiner for our class was Doug Bingeman – what a fantastic guy. Doug was professional but laid back; he kept things running on time and yet didn't rush anyone; and he was thorough in his evaluations. There were no shortcuts and at the end of the day, we all knew that we had worked our butts off and earned our credentials.

During the combined 12 days, I managed to earn not only my OWSI, but also my PADI Emergency First Response Instructor certification and a number of additional Specialty Instructor certifications.

There were two very memorable things that happened during the IDC/IE in Edmonton. First, my dive computer stopped working. Shout out to Shearwater and Trisha Stovel for sending me a loaner dive computer to use for the remainder of my time in Edmonton – they had it to me overnight so that I wouldn't have the added stress of not having a working computer for the open water portion of the course and exam. Second, the neck seal on my drysuit ripped shortly after I descended for the open water portion of the IE. I completed my rescue scenario with a flooded drysuit and soaked undergarments. Needless to say, I was pretty chilly the whole time I was underwater! Nothing like a little adversity to build one's character.

Having successfully achieved my PADI OWSI certification, I was able to upgrade my HSA credentials to be a full instructor with that organization as well.



POOL CHALLENGE SESSIONS

One of the comments we hear about our pool sessions is that it gets boring just “hanging” round the bottom of the pool. And every so often we hear the comment that there are skills I never use and do not often practice. The Battlefords Scuba Community decided to do something about both comments, and we dubbed it our Sunday Challenge Session.

There are a great number of skills, even just within the curriculum of the Open Water course, that we perform during the course and then put on the shelf to get rusty, knowing they will be there if and when we need them. And many times, we add the corollary that I won't need them because I am a safe diver! And many of us get away with that approach to the lesser used skills. But what would happen if we were called upon to deal with a free-flowing regulator, or an out-of-air situation? Could we handle it or would we risk becoming a statistic? With those thoughts in mind, we have set aside some time to do some informal work on those skills, to practice them, to refine them and maybe to add a little to them. Some of the sessions focus on fun things like using lift bags or tying knots underwater with gloves on – skills that can be important in some situations. Other skills that we play with expand out envelopes a little, challenging us to try the ideas, new ways of doing things, that may lead to our taking another course to follow-up on that particular item.

Some of the skills we have reviewed include:

Skin diving	Buoyancy control	Knot tying
Out-of-air emergencies	(Self-) rescue skills	First aid
Neutral buoyancy skills	SMB deployment	Equalization
Search patterns		

Some of the skills we have introduced include:

Sidemount diving	Alternative equipment configurations	
Entanglement	Reduced visibility	Lift bag use
Diver propulsion vehicles	Delayed SMB use	Use of reels
Pony bottle use		

And we have some we have not introduced yet:

Measuring distance underwater	Buddy breathing	Unfamiliar equipment
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These are chances to reinforce existing skills and to introduce new skills in a fun environment. If you have ideas for additions to our list, please let us know and we would be happy to add them. And why not come out and try some of these fun challenges?

BATTLEFORDS SCUBA COMMUNITY RESCUE DIVER COMPETITION

The BSC is planning a Rescue Diver Competition for mid-February. The project is a response to the often repeated “We should practice our rescue skills” refrain. This will provide a reason to practice and then an opportunity to show them off. Spectators will be welcome. Here are some of the details.

Purpose:

- To challenge certified Rescue Divers to practice their skills and improve them
- To expose Rescue Divers to different ideas and ways of performing aquatic rescues
- To encourage other divers to take up the Rescue Diver program with their respective certifying agencies
- To add another in-water activity of a different type to the growing list being carried out in Saskatchewan
- To expose non-divers to an important but often neglected dive activity to facilitate their understanding and to encourage them to take up diving
- To promote diving safety



Means:

- Three-person teams complete various rescue skills and scenarios in front of a panel of judges
 - Recognition of and response to a first aid emergency on dry land
 - Recognition and dealing with stress in a diver
 - Recognition and response to a panicky diver at the surface
 - Recognition and response to a non-responsive diver at the surface
 - Recognition and response to a missing diver
 - Quiz of twenty-five questions concerning the theory behind dive rescue
 - Each team will respond to each of the above situations and shall, as a team, complete the quiz. The panel will score the teams on a scale of 1 to 10 with comments to assist each team in improving its function.
 - The quiz will be a multiple-choice format and will be marked by an Instructor on the organizing committee using a prepared answer key.
 - The team with the highest score will be declared the winner.

Team Composition:

- Each team will be comprised of three swimmers, with the option of having a coach who will not be in the water.
- The captain of each team and one other diver on the team must be certified at least to the level of a Rescue Diver but can be certified to a higher level.
- Teams will be able to use bystanders to perform appropriate tasks.
- All members of the team must be certified divers.
- Minimum age is 15 years of age.
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Judges:

- The events will be judged by a panel of individuals familiar with emergency scenarios:
- Each judge will score each skill/scenario on a scale of 1 to 10 and the scores will be added to give a cumulative score for each team.
- Judges will make notes that can be passed on to the team members during the debriefing for the event.
- The organizing committee will transcribe the comments and ensure that each team receives a copy of that transcription.
- Judges will consider:
 - Situational awareness
 - Promptness of the responses
 - Appropriateness of response
 - Organization of the response
 - Clarity of instructions
 - Use of by-standers
 - Safety of the responders
 - Effectiveness and efficiency of the response
 - Proper use of equipment
 - Completeness of the response
 - Correctness of the response

UPDATE ON ATTON'S LAKE INSTALLATIONS

For the past couple of years anyone who has followed the Club's activities has likely become bored with the repetitious refrain of Atton's Lake Underwater Navigation Course Rejuvenation – I know the executive has! The plans have been on the books for the past three years, but delays seemed interminable. We had COVID delays and then the visibility turned bad and there were permits and permissions to deal with on top of problems getting the divers together to work on the project. I am pleased to say that the heavy lifting is completed and in the spring we have only to mark (with buoys) so we can get a GPS location on all the items and then Mark can finish his revisions to the map of the area.

The original markers and lines were installed for the BSC in 2011 by Mark and Noreen Barclay and Ken Waddell – five traffic delineators linked with polypropylene rope. The intent was to enable people to practice their navigation skills and refine them. It also provided something to see on an otherwise bleak bottom. In 2016 the club added a teaching platform, an 8 ft. by 12 ft. white puck board stage on legs to elevate it above the bottom so that students were not kneeling in the silt (and stirring it up) when doing their skills.



Over the years the poly line connecting markers often snagged fishhooks or anchors and gradually the lines were made slack, and the markers were pulled out of position, and as the line floated toward the surface it became an entanglement problem for swimmers and boat propellers.

The dive platform, when it sank, skated through the water, and wound up sitting on a significant slope which made it difficult to kneel on without sliding across it and into the silt on the other side. It has stirred up the bottom enough that we decided to leave it for the time being and

move it later. We cursed, we swore, and we threatened to move it, but it never seemed to happen.



Then Matilda was added to the mix – a twenty-foot length to forty-eight-inch black plastic culvert became our swim through. To make the course more complete it was decided to create an overhead environment with an exit at the top halfway down its length. Its now become home to hordes of freshwater shrimp!





Some of the club members who have worked diligently on their navigation skills were looking for greater challenges and urged that we sink additional delineators that were not attached to the existing markers with any lines so we really would have to navigate to find them. Then we got offers of a couple of boats to sink for additional underwater attractions. Members discussed ideas thoroughly. A plan was developed and agreed to.

The next spring, permissions were sought from the Atton's Lake Regional Park Authority and the Saskatchewan water Security Agency – lots of paperwork! The visibility at the lake became bad over the summer and by the time the AHP Permit was received, we deemed it too dangerous to put divers in the water with lines and the possibility of disorientation and entanglement and the project was shelved for the next season.

The following year, we had permits in hand early, but the visibility was still terrible, and the wait was on. Injuries and illness and recoveries kept several of the avid divers sidelined. Finally, a couple of Rob Florence and I with shore supervisor Wendy Florence and on-the-water boss Adele Perrett decided to give things a try. We attached lift bags to the dive platform, which turned out not to be mired as firmly in the gelatinous goo at the bottom. We got it moved further out to a much more level spot where it waits for us to arrive. On that same day we were able to return marker #1 to close to its original position so that the original course stands close to the positions shown on the map.

Later in the season, Mark and Noreen Barclay and I decided we should get the new traffic pylons in place. Four new pylons were set into position on measured headings and distances from the existing # 5 and # 6 delineators and some reference distances and heading to shore features were recorded with the assistance of Richard Reed.

The final additions were made late in October when Rob and Wendy Florence, Robert and Joanne Turpin, Mark Barclay, Richard Reed and I joined forces to sink the two boats in the bay. The GPS location of each was recorded. We did learn that when you want a boat to sink, it does so very slowly and sometimes need a bit of encouragement.



By the end of that day, Mark had enough information to draft a preliminary sketch of the revised map, a copy of which is included with this. One of the big differences between this and the original map is that the shoreline is depicted at closer to scale. When the first map was drawn, we were concerned only with it being to scale – the shore just was. Now we realize that threw the overall perception of the size of the course off. This will give us an idea of the relationship between the course and the shoreline.

Battlefords Scuba Community has a new look under the water at Atton's Lake and will soon have a new look above the water too.

CELEBRITY DISCOVER SCUBA HELD

The Battlefords Scuba Community held its Celebrity Discover Scuba at the Battlefords Co-op Aquatic Centre on Sunday, November 27. The event saw representatives of various organizations taking part in an introductory scuba course.

The idea behind the event was first and foremost to thank the organizations and agencies that have funded the club's Discover Scuba for High Schools program and those organizations that have supported the program in other ways. Over the past ten years the BSC has offered the sessions to high schools in the region at no charge to the students with financial assistance from BATC, the City of North Battleford, the Town of Battleford, the SaskTel Foundation, the Saskatchewan Underwater Council and the 2018 Saskatchewan Winter Games Legacy Foundation. In expressing that appreciation, the club felt it would be interesting to have those representatives do a Discover Scuba to experience what their funding had made available to the students.

The event was also an attempt to make those in positions where they meet and talk with a lot of people more aware of scuba diving in this region and the province as a whole. It was also an endeavour to make people more aware of what is involved in scuba diving – that it is more than just a matter of strapping a tank on one's back and jumping into the water. It was especially important for the representatives to see what an impact their funds had.

Since the Discover Scuba for High Schools program was begun, over 1800 students from 45 communities had taken part in the program coming from Buffalo Narrows, Debden, Rosetown, Lloydminster and points between. A number of those students have come back for further training. Each year new schools are added to the program. The various agencies have contributed funds totaling more than seventy thousand dollars toward the cause.

For this year's Celebrity Discover Scuba Mayor Leslie represented the Town of Battleford and the BATC, Dustin Bohse represented the 2018 Saskatchewan Winter Games Legacy Foundation and Pamela Connor, and Chris Odishaw represented the Chamber of Commerce. Busy schedules kept some other participants from attending.

Organizers stated that they were pleased with the turn-out and the participation and felt that the response of those participating was extremely positive.



COMING EVENTS

Sunday, November 27, 2022	Celebrity Discover Scuba
Sunday, December 11, 2022	Re-Activate Refresher Course
Sunday, December 18, 2022	Santa & Mrs. Claus Visit to BSC at the pool
Sunday, January 15, 2023	Underwater Gymkhana
Sunday, January 22, 2023	Re-Activate Refresher Course
Sunday, January 29, 2023	Discover Scuba for the public
February 3 – 5, 2023	Open Water Scuba Diver course
Sunday, February 12, 2023	Rescue Diver Competition
Sat. & Sun., March 11 & 12	DAN Diving First Aid for Dive Professionals course
Sunday, March 26, 2023	Underwater Photo Contest
Saturday, April 15, 2023	Viz Party (Cylinder Visual Inspection Day)
Sat. & Sun., June 17 & 18/23	Definitely Diving Days
Sunday, July 16, 2023	Women's Dive Day
Sunday, August 7, 2023	Drive 'n' Dive



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*Merry
Christmas*