



# Sounding

## *Newsletter of the South Shore Neptunes*

### ANNOUNCEMENTS, ACTIVITIES, & REMINDERS

#### Calendar 2022

##### May

5/17 Program: Ben Haskell - NOAA  
Dept Supt.: New Perspectives  
Managing Historic Shipwrecks in  
Stellwagen Bank: **See Announcements**  
5/20-21 RAGNAR Race Fundraiser

##### June

6/7 General Meeting  
**6/11: Club visit to Joe Hohmann in-  
house museum of shipwreck relics**  
6/12 Club Dive 8AM  
6/14 Board Meeting  
6/21 Program  
6/26 Club Dive 8AM

##### July

7/5 General Meeting  
**7/9 Nantucket Lightship  
Museum Outing: Cookout  
& museum visit starting at  
4PM. Details forthcoming**  
7/10 Club Dive 8AM  
7/12 Board Meeting  
7/16 Rain date: **Nantucket  
Lightship Museum Outing:**  
7/24 Club Dive 8AM

##### August

8/2 General Meeting 7PM  
8/7 Duxbury Outing (Tent)  
8/9 Board Mtng 7PM  
8/14 Club Dive 8AM  
8/28 Club Dive 8AM

- **Program Night Venue and Time Change:** Our speaker, **Ben Haskell, NOAA Deputy Superintendent**, will speak on New Perspectives Managing Historic Shipwrecks, at **7:00PM** this **Tuesday evening, May 17, at the Quincy Yacht Club, located at 1310 Sea Street, in Quincy.**
- **June 11: Club visit to Joe Hohmann's in house museum of shipwreck relics.** Meet at old clubhouse at 11AM. Carpool to Joe's.
- **Women Club Members only Night Out.** Details TBA. Watch for a special email in the near future!
- Underwater Rugby hours: *Wednesday* nites 8:00-9:30 PM at Westwood HS pool. Joe Gomes is working on a history of underwater rugby and needs photo credits and any sorts of media that could help him illustrate the sport across time. He can be reached at: <jsgomes@gmail.com>
- Club General, Board, and Program night meetings *are now* in person (attend only if you are feeling well) or by Zoom until further notice. The **Annual Banquet** has been **postponed indefinitely**. On the other hand, All Club Outdoor Activities listed on the Calendar *remain live with social distancing rules in effect, as per 2022.*
- Newsletter: To help add interesting content to the newsletter, please send me ([robisonr25@yahoo.com](mailto:robisonr25@yahoo.com); or [newsletter@southshoreneptunes.org](mailto:newsletter@southshoreneptunes.org)) any first-hand accounts, stories, photos, or both about your exploits as a Neptune for potential publication. Photos or clippings enhance stories, so please include them if you can. Don't forget

#### April Evening Program

Special thanks to **Sarah McCormack** ([sarah.mccormack@whales.org](mailto:sarah.mccormack@whales.org)), Stranding

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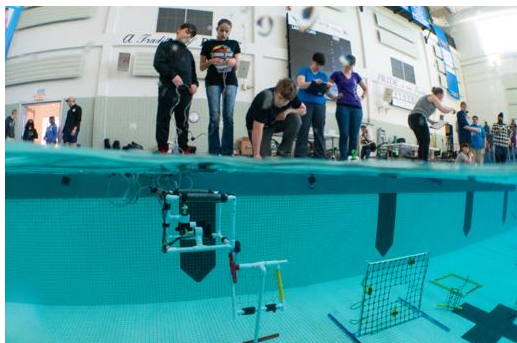
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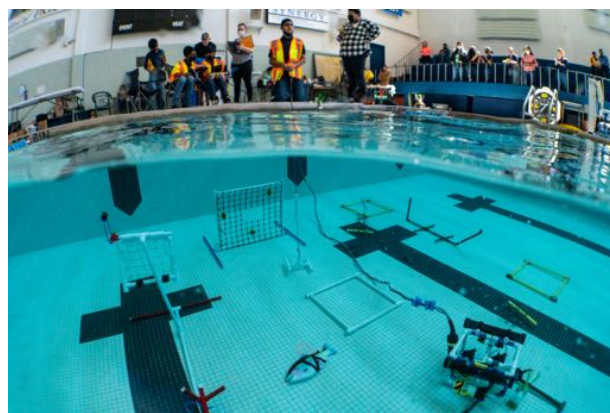
Coordinator for WDC North America at Whales.org, located at 7 Nelson St, Plymouth, MA. If you encounter a stranding on the beach or a wounded animal in the water, call the WDC Stranding Hotline at 866-688-6872 or NOAA at 866-755-6622. Thanks, Sarah!

## EVENTS & DIVES



**MATE ROV Competition May 1, 2022.** *Story by Marcus Gay; photos by Marcus Gay and Matt Scheuer, <IG@electricity\_underwater>.*

The New England chapter of the International MATE (Marine Advanced Technology Education) ROV (Remote Operated Vehicle — underwater robotics) Competition <https://materovcompetition.org/newengland> was held Sunday, May 1, at Massachusetts Maritime Academy



(MMA) in Buzzards Bay. A total of 85 student competitors ranging from middle school through high school competed in three different classes, each requiring the student-built ROVs to complete underwater tasks that included: survey of a mockup underwater comms and power cable, removal and replacement of broken sections, measuring dimensions of artificial fish, calculations of biomass in mockup fish pens and survey of designated transects to document and map a mockup of Shackleton's Endurance shipwreck.

Twelve teams from around the Northeastern US competed, submitting detailed technical reports, presenting posters, a job safety analysis and being scored on 15 minute engineering presentations in addition to their two mission attempts in the MMA pool. The winning teams in the Ranger Class are from Medford Vocational Technical High School in Medford, MA, and Harrington Middle School in Mt. Laurel, NJ. These teams advance to the MATE ROV World Championships in Long Beach, CA at the end of June.



A total of 55 volunteers, judges, divers, MMA cadets and staff from local organizations filled the many roles to make the competition a success.

South Shore Neptune member, **Marcus Gay**, volunteered as the Dive Safety Officer for the day.

<https://materovcompetition.org/newenglandsponsors>

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**Club Dive @Pemberton Pier.** May 1, 2022. *Story by Ken Hayes.* Ken Hayes, Sokol Prifti, and Chuck Zarba met at Pemberton Pier on a very windy Saturday morning for a dive. Very low vi and difficult conditions yielded nothing but stirred up silt and catch bags full of trash. Not much else to report.

**Beach Cleanup at Little Pond in Morton Park (Plymouth).** Sunday, April 24, 2022. *Story by Rob Robison; photos by Theresa Czerepica and Rob.*

Chuck Zarba, Joe McAndrews, Ken Hayes, Bill Burchill, Bill Walker, Alex Wieck, John Blackadar, Theresa Czerepica, and I converged on Little Pond at Plymouth's Morton Park around 9 AM to set up the club tent, tables, chairs and signage. In preparation for the beach cleanup and dive we had organized in conjunction with **Wayne Gomer's** Diver's Market dive shop. Wayne runs this event twice a year as a thank you to the town of Plymouth, its Parks and



Recreation Department, and local residents for allowing him to use the pond as a diver training facility.

When we arrived, recently shop-certified divers **Devon Turner** and **Walter Minor** were already on hand anticipating the dive, as were shop Dive Society members **Peter Renaud** and Divemasters **Seamus Hastings** and **Josh Souza**. **Jack Ahern**, well known local diver, made an appearance, as did Neptunes Club VP, **Adrienne Murphy**, who joined those getting wet. Prospective new member **Michael Coyne** suited up, too.

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Wayne arrived around 11 bearing raffle prizes and began to hobnob and enjoy the scene.

After Theresa and Blackie signed in all the divers and had them complete shop waiver forms, the dive clean up began. The most unusual items found were the top half of a broken glass jug and a very waterlogged old board. Other items, such as trash in the form of empty drink cans, take-out plastic containers, styrofoam cups, old fishing lures, and golf balls were recovered, as well.

Walter's wife, **Sherer**, and their 10 year old son set up an unexpected impromptu barbecue and feted us with hot dogs, burgers, pasta salad, cookies, etc. Thanks Shira and Walter!

As the feast subsided, Blackie raffled off the dive items donated by Wayne, plus Dunkin' Donuts gift certificates, as well as gift certificates for ice cream at **Mark Zipeto's Kilwins Chocolates and Ice Cream Shop** in Plymouth, located at the harbor rotary.

Suffice to say, if you missed this club event, you missed a great opportunity to meet new divers, kibbutz with local divers and club members, be regaled by 'Fingers' and his nonstop story telling, as he gleefully raced around the park with his trash snatcher and bucket, and to enjoy a relaxing tune up dive in 52° water with 10'-15' vis, and a delightful Sunday just diving into it in the park and pond with a lot of great people. Hope to see you at the next one!

**P.S.** Don't forget to drive down to the shop in North Plymouth on 3A to get a free air fill, if you dove at the beach clean up on Sunday, April 24. Also, see more photos from the cleanup on our Facebook Page.

**Pleasure Bay. Saturday, April 16, 2022.** Reprinted, courtesy South Boston Online, Page 2, 4-21-2022. (Ed note: Doug Eaton and Chuck Zarba, tho present, are not pictured or mentioned in this article.)

## South Shore Neptunes Visit Pleasure Bay

by Rick Winterson

Last weekend was actually cool and very windy. Unpleasantly so, in fact! But that did not stop (or even slow down) two divers from the South Shore Neptunes, who retrieved trash from the bottom of Pleasure Bay.

The two South Shore Neptunes pictured – Brian and Rob – are members of one of the oldest dive clubs in the country. Located in Quincy and attracting some 130 members from all over Massachusetts, the Neptunes have been active for more than 60 years. They claim they were the first dive club to welcome women divers – in 1967, 55 years ago.

According to them, they perform community services all along the Commonwealth's coastline by diving and removing trash from the ocean floor – a form of beach cleanup that takes place underwater.

Note that the bottles Brian and Rob brought back up are heavily encrusted with shells – they've been at the bottom of Pleasure Bay for quite a while. One of the bottles was an old eight-ouncer with the "Pepsi Cola" name formed in the glass itself. The name was still barely visible; could this bottle be nearly a century old? Older than our Lagoon itself?

Despite their community service activities, the Neptunes are really devoted hobbyists, who do their diving in the members' spare time. Members include business people, students, fishermen, and even divers who work professionally as well. The Neptunes' diving is an unpaid, volunteer activity, and their highly varied diving adventures take place on boats, at night, into wrecks, from the Harbor Islands, and even during the winter – plunges they call "Ice Dives".

Neptunes, thanks for your helping hands (and fins) in Pleasure Bay.



Brian (in dry suit) and Rob (in wet suit) from the South Shore Neptunes.

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**Circleville (OH) Dive Center.** Wednesday, April 27, 2022. Story & photos by Rob Robison

On my way to a class reunion in Mercersburg, PA, I took a detour to Columbus, Ohio to visit our daughter, and took advantage of the nearness of the quarries to make a dive with my erstwhile Columbus dive buddy, **John Skobel**. Unfortunately, my other buddy, **Rick Blaine**, could not accompany us this time.

We met at the quarry around

2PM and quickly geared up and dropped into the quarry's murky 3' — 4' vis. Spring rains had flooded the streams and rivers to levels overflowing their banks, which carried heavy loads of silt and particulate matter from runoff. These feed the underground aquifers that nourish the springs bubbling up in the area quarries; hence, the extremely low vis.

We moved in a clockwise direction around the quarry visiting about 3/4 of the points of interest.

Vis was so

low I practically ran into a Black Eared Sunfish, which was staring me right in the face. Despite the poor vis, some of my photos actually turned out reasonably well, which was surprising to say the least.

We remained underwater for 47 minutes, cut short only by the 52°F water that was seeping inside and

down my neck seal. Getting soaked to the bone was not on the agenda for this dive.

We did make a visit to the final resting place of former dive buddy, Donn Ellerbrock, under the billiard table, unlike our recent visit together at the quarry last month. Both John and I try to make that



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pilgrimage each time we dive the quarry, wearing a talisman that we each have from Donn's considerable stockpile of equipment, some of which we each possess. Plus, I photograph the spot to commemorate the pilgrimage and our



devotion to his memory. Donn and I were both born on August 4, 1948.

As previously mentioned, because I was about to get soaked, we cut the dive short and exited the water with more than 2/3 of the air remaining in each of our tanks. Then, it was time for grub and brewskies at Gibby's, the local burger bar in Circleville, to close out a wonderful time with a great dive buddy.



**Diving Plum Cove and Ft Wetherill.** April 16 and 23, 2022. Story and photos by Rob Robison

Taxes completed and transmitted electronically, Peter and I met at the Beverly RT 128 Service Center/Burger King on Saturday morning and headed to Plum Cove to get wet. After spending a week in Cozumel, Mexico (April Sounding), luxuriating in 81° air and underwater temps, the 43°F cold North Atlantic seemed to be just that--cold!

We suited up and headed out looking for flounder--Peter brought his paralyzer spear-tipped pole and I my camera. While the turbulence outside the cove did not affect the dive, it did decrease the visibility to

5'-7' on average, at depths no deeper than 15.' Although we spied no game fish of any kind, I did manage to photograph skeleton shrimp on eel grass for the first time, a Sea Lemon nudibranch, a Molgula tunicate, some longwrist hermit crabs holding a pow wow, a variety of rock and spiral rock weeds, and a bit more. Burgers at Darcy's topped off the dive and the





wonderful camaraderie Peter and I enjoy when diving together.

On the ensuing **Saturday the 23**, we met up at **Ft. Wetherill**, along with mutual dive buddy, Brian Smith from Diver's Market around 9 o'clock. Peter was interested in trying out our new spear guns, while I was interested in photographing the experience, and Brian was along just to enjoy the sights.

As we suited up and helped each other with our gear, my semi-drysuit zipper broke unexpectedly, ending my dive prematurely.

Brian and Peter headed out into the water, but shortly thereafter Brian had to return for more weights. He was trying to determine how to configure his buoyancy with an aluminum tank, which he rarely, if ever, dives. Once refitted with a little extra lead, he enjoyed a wonderful dive checking out the tube worms, mating horseshoe crabs, and skate.

Peter stayed in the water for about an hour and finally came upon a large Tautaug that appeared to be dead. As he approached it, the fish suddenly sensed his presence and took off like a bat out of hell. Peter missed this one and only target opportunity on that dive. Afterwards, we laughed about it over burgers at Mickey D's. Better luck next time for all of us.



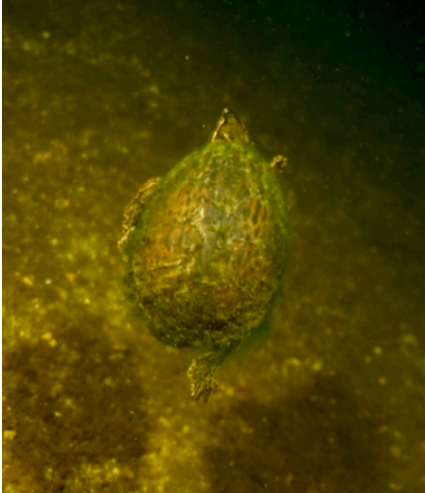
**Back River at WWI Dock.** Saturday May 7, 2022. *Story by Chuck Zarba and Rob Foley; photo by Rob Foley.*

Chuck Zarba and Rob Foley met at the Back River near the WWI dock at 9AM, amidst overcast skies and heavy NE winds. It was a bit before low tide. The water temp was 48°F, vis was a scant 6" - 1'. Veteran zero/negative vis diver Chuck Z's and Rob F's bottom times were @ 25min each. Hats off to them. I doubt I would have stayed that long under those conditions. Regardless, undaunted by the less-than optimum conditions, Rob found some glass shards and horseshoe crabs, and Chuck took the prize by managing to uncover a large diameter brass ring without the lid that must that have been attached to it.

Afterwards, the pair spoke with Park Ranger Scott, who informed them The Bear Cove Park Museum is now open until end of the season on the second and fourth Sunday of each month between 10AM - 1PM. He mentioned

having recently found two WWI training shells, stamped Dummy, up river, stuck in the mud, at low tide. Just goes to show you, to the persistent go the spoils.

**Twin stories: Night Diving Little Pond at Morton Park (Plymouth). Friday, May 6, and Skunked Again at Ft Wetherill.** Sunday, May 8, 2022. *Stories and photos by Rob Robison.*



I had sent out an email looking for a dive buddy for Friday, Saturday, or Sunday. Neptune Rob Foley answered he wanted to night dive at Little Pond in Morton Park, and erstwhile dive buddy, Peter Ninh, decided he could dive Sunday morning; so I was psyched.

Friday's sunny morning skies had changed to overcast ones, but the forthcoming rain and wind were predicted to hold off until midnight or later, so I headed to the park a bit early to get a head start on gearing up. It takes considerably longer to put on a drysuit than a wet suit or semi-dry suit. I wanted to be close to ready before Rob Foley arrived.

RF arrived as I was putting on my drysuit over the undergarments. While kibitzing, a trout fisherman walked by. Turns out it was Yuri, a Ukrainian immigrant and former



Neptune who dives with us

once in a great while. Apparently, he caught one trout before calling it quits after a long late afternoon of casting without much luck. He spoke of a recent live aboard experience in Thailand, but didn't elaborate too much other than the dive was warm and great and the trip was on a cheap live aboard.

Rob and I hit the water as night was falling. He had two underwater



flashlights of different sizes he wanted to try out, and I my trusty Sea Life DC2000, supported by twin 4500 Lumens video-cam lights. (I told him to follow the sun, if he got lost.) We submerged and found ourselves a bit off track in our search for the underwater figurines, but located the huge log and concrete lid and used those underwater landmarks to right our track. The Slowdown man, Alien, Chilly Willy, et. al.,





were just off to our left and a bit deeper.

After taking some commemorative photos, we headed west around the point and followed the terrain for a bit before deciding to head back because there wasn't much to see. I turned over a small rock and found a baby crawdad and a minnow of some sort (no photos), and that's about it. Rob found a brown glass bottle and some other unworthy trash.

As we neared the entry point, Rob grabbed my attention just as I was surfacing. He had spied a small snapping turtle swimming underwater and was following it with his light. I took some photos and a video clip (Click on it), never having seen one underwater in the pond, also for posterity. Then, it was time to exit, stow our gear, and head home from a fun night dive with a wonderful dive buddy. Dive stats: 26', 25min., 53°— water's warming however slowly—15-20' vis.

**Skunked Again at Ft Wetherill:** The forecasted gale force winds that arrived sometime early Saturday morning were still howling like no tomorrow on Sunday morning, blowing out of the ENE. Peter and I knew we'd have an easy time of it at the dive cove at Ft Wetherill, which offers protection from those particular winds.

My dive buddy and I met up at Ft Wetherill for the dive at 9 AM. Fortuitously, my new replacement semi-dry suit arrived Saturday just in time to try it out this beautiful Sunday morning.



Our dive was 46 minutes long at 28-29', with a murky 10' of vis in the 48°F water. As we were about to submerge, a diver from a nearby class claimed it was 53°, but clearly he was talking thru his hat. Peter's and my dive computers registered the same temp--48°F!

The dive itself was uneventful, save 2-3 skates we saw, plus some tube worm anemones, a large Forbes Starfish, a couple of small colonies of Northern Star Corals in feeding mode, an Orange Sheath Tunicate, and not much else. The water is still too cold for most of the daytime sea life. As a by product of the day's dive, I discovered that the new suit is not any warmer than the old one, especially since I'm 4 months shy of my 74th birthday. The body seems to generate less and less heat with each passing year, though the mind rebels mightily at that notion.

Afterwards, we ate burgers at BK, Peter worked on some



adjustments to my fish slaying gear; then, we headed home. I stopped at the boatyard to throw a piece of equipment into Commando, then fell asleep, as soon as I reached the house, where I sawed 3 hours worth of logs, waking up just in time for dinner.

If you are wondering what happened to Mother's Day, my wife, Carol, and I celebrated that event the night before at a wonderful restaurant in Carver, we'd seen often but never tried, called Crane Brook Restaurant ([cranebrookrestaurant.com](http://cranebrookrestaurant.com)). Outstanding food and wine for those so inclined, and a very interesting history that dates back to the founding of this country.

So, Happy Mother's Day to all of you mothers, and a special thanks to two great dive buddies, Rob Foley and Peter Ninh, who helped to make the diving part of the weekend special, too.

Safe living and safe diving, everyone!

Rob

## *South Shore Neptunes* *Information Page*

**WANT TO GO DIVING AND NEED  
A BUDDY?**

**Club Hotline: Call or text 617-804-5637**

Club Officers, 2022		
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