



Air Bubbles



The Newsletter of the North Shore Frogmen's Club

October 2021

President's Message

By: Bill Werner

Our club has seen a dramatic reduction in members participating in our activities, especially diving. Perhaps this is largely due to COVID and our loss of access to PCYC. However, over the last several months, we have had great participation in several of our most popular events.

Our annual week in Vermont was a great success! Annette was very happy to have us visit once again after we had to cancel last year. All the participants had a great week, full of diving, kayaking, campfires, good food and drink and, most of all great company! Annette found us new places to dive and kayak. We made new friends...at least I would like to think so. During our various explorations above and below the water's surface, we found small boats, old/antique barrel staves, a like-new fully intact popup tent. Apparently, the barrel staves were of great interest to the Historical Society Annette contacted. As always, Annette was a fantastic hostess! While many people helped make the week a great success, Vinny deserves special recognition for his fantastic organization and coordination of the whole week. Without his efforts, the event would not be as organized and smooth running as it is every year!

I believe our next event was our annual club picnic in September. This event was supposed to be coordinated with the Bay State Council Treasure Hunt and Multi-club participation, as it has been in past years. However, due to COVID and to lack of adequate volunteers from the various groups, the picnic was an NSF only activity. We had the permit for Site A in Stage Fort Park and decide to have our annual picnic without the other groups. The weather was perfect, and we had a decent turnout of over 20 Frogs and family. There was some hiking about, Mary and Ray dove Half Moon Beach, and Jackie dove elsewhere. We did the usual grilling of hamburgers and kielbasa, along with fresh corn-on-the-cob, thanks to Mary and Ray. We would have had cheese on the burgers, but I forgot it in the refrigerator. Oh well, everyone survived without cheese. We also had great sides and deserts provided by members. Dylan volunteered to be chief cook and performed most commendably! Everyone relaxed, enjoyed their favorite beverage, and socialized.

Our last "Big Event" was Sea Rovers. While Sea Rovers is normally the first weekend in March, this year due to COVID it was decided to host the event the 1st weekend in October. We should have been beyond the pandemic stage with vaccinations, but then, of course, we had the delta variant! The event was successfully held with attendees obligated to wear masks. No one appeared to suffer, and everyone appeared to have a great time. Our Club made many new contacts from local new divers to divers new to the area. We now must make them feel welcome and get out and dive with them and impart our decades of experience to them. We also made contacts with a couple of dive travel folks who are willing to do Zoom presentations for us. This might be set up as a joint multi-club venture. Susan Long, formally of DUI, now doing travel arrangements for the Sea of Cortez and Socorro liveaboards was very interested in giving us a presentation. Les Corkill, from Atlantis in the Philippines, would be presenting the many options for their land-based and liveaboards in that area. I have been to both areas, and, in my humble opinion, both are great! It would be fun to arrange a group trip with our club members and perhaps friends from other clubs. Something to think about.

Sea Rovers was a success thanks to the efforts of all who showed up to assist in setup and personing the booth and greeting visitors to make them feel welcome! Dylan, Mary, and Ray were there all weekend and Mary and Ray were also present on Friday to set up our booth. We did get fine brews at the Sea Rovers reception after setup – which made it all worthwhile. Vinny and Dodie were also there to lend their support. Thank you to all who made the weekend a success. Now we must reach out to these new contacts and dive with them!

We do have future plans in the works. Hikes have been popular, and, with cooler weather, we will plan a few. We are also working to schedule a group or two to the Museum of Science to see Ancient Caves. We are looking to book in late October or early November. The film is 45 minutes long. We would look to view the film and go to lunch or dinner before or after the film. People can also visit exhibits in the museum. We need to gather information on who is interested and their availability. Please reach out to us. Thank you.

Let's stay active. We can really try to grow the Club with new members but it will take effort from our existing members.



Sundew carnivorous plant in VT



Sculptures at Harpoon Brewery

Member Recognition

By: Bill Werner

Recognizing the members who contribute so much to the Club is a privilege for the President:

July Diver of the Month: **Dylan** for learning how to lobster-hunt and constantly refining his skills

August Diver of the Month: **Annette** for planning great NH and VT dive trips for the Froggies during VT Week

September Diver of the Month: **Mary** for diving at the picnic

October Divers of the Month: **Ray and Mary** for being instrumental with Sea Rovers set-up and its success

July Member of the Month: **Vinny** for his excellent organization and promotion of VT Week

August Member of the Month: **Annette** for everything she did that resulted in a great VT Week

September Member of the Month: **Dylan** as chief cook at the club picnic, securing Onion Town Grill for an indoor meeting space, and for being the principle contact at Sea Rovers

October Member of the Month: **Alexine** - one of the club's most active divers

2021 Froggie VT Dive Week

By: Vinny Egizi

WOW! What a great time we had in Vermont this year. After our 2020 plans were cancelled due to COVID, it was really nice to be able to get together as a club and enjoy Annette's hospitality and many outdoor activities. We had between 11 and 21 Froggies, family, and friends each day plus several of Annette's friends (Lisa, Larry, and Don), making it a busy and fun week. With everyone chipping in to help with food prep, cleanup, lunch-making, fire preparation, and tank filling, it was a real team effort which made this year's event a huge success. The activities in the kitchen were made more interesting by watching the many hummingbirds, yellow finches, cardinals, skunks, blue herrings, and eagles outside, as well as the tents getting bombarded with the deluge of rain we had at times throughout the week (no birds, skunks, nor tents were injured during these events). During the nice evenings we had some very big campfires and on two nights we were able to see the International Space Station (ISS) fly overhead.

With so much rain during the weeks prior to our event, the first few diving attempts in the Connecticut River were very murky and not very successful nor interesting. However, the extra water flow did make for some fun high speed cruising by our kayaking members from Sumner Falls to the Harpoon Brewery, during which one member found a fully intact tent. Those who dove at Sumner falls encountered poor visibility and some very strong currents. However, even in this poor visibility, Dodie and Vinny happened to find the same very large snapping turtle walking around on two separate dives. We soon realized that snorkeling at the base of the falls, letting the water push us across to the opposite riverbank, and riding the eddy current back upstream was more fun than diving; even if one Froggie ended up on the wrong side of the current and got washed downstream a bit (thank you Vange for the shore support kayak rescue). Although Vange only came up for the day and had to leave after the diving/snorkeling, the rest of us headed to the Harpoon Brewery and met up with the kayakers for a few pints and snacks.

Annette planned a swimming afternoon on one of the Connecticut River tributaries (Saxtons River), where we waded and trudged our way upstream in the fast moving water looking for lost gold coins that were sent into the river when a house on the river bank was washed away from one of the recent hurricanes. Although we did not find any coins, the search was fun. Unfortunately, the photographic evidence of this event was also washed away when Peter's camera came loose and went downstream. Future generations who find this artifact will look back and wonder what the ancient people of 2021 were doing.

We spent the next several days filling the VT/NH roads with our 10-car caravans as we hauled diving gear and kayaks to several sites including Spofford and Silver lakes. At Spofford Lake, we were able to enter from the private property of Steve and Marilyn (Annette's friends), who were very gracious and highly interested in our diving activities. Before our very easy entry from the dock ramp, Annette briefed us on her continued hunt for the lost steamship. Although we did not find the steamship, Bill found a sunken rowboat and Daryl/Annette found some very interesting barrel staves and a tar like substance. Both the staves and tar samples were collected and taken to the historical society for analysis. In Silver Lake, we hugged the shoreline looking for and finding old bottles and other lost items. Ray decided to do his own thing on this day and completed a very impressive 30-mile bike ride around the Rockingham/Bellows Fall area; which was a great training ride for his 100km bike ride several weeks later.

As the week came to a close, we decided to kayak on the last day at Gale Meadows Pond. The ride started out very nice and then about 15 minutes later the skies opened up once again and we were drenched for about 20 minutes. As Vinny was wiping the water away from his face, his prescription glasses were washed into the murky pond, never to be seen again. Soon the skies cleared up and the remainder of the 4.18mi trip was terrific. Overall the 2021 Froggie VT Dive Trip was a great success and we can never thank Annette enough for hosting this annual tradition. We look forward to 2022.

Beautiful Vermont



The Adventures of Frog Team 12

By: Gregory Przybyl

It was a dark and stormy night. The members of Frog Team 12 were assembled on the shores of Xanadu. The rain didn't bother them, they had their mission: To rescue Stud Muffin and his wife Sparkles, the Unicorn King and Queen of Xanadu. The time was short, Harry the Hyena, and his pack, The Hungry Hyenas were planning on staging a coup to take over Xanadu with the King and Queen as the main entrees for the victory feast.

OK, OK, so it wasn't a dark and stormy night, actually it was a pleasant Saturday afternoon (8/21), though a hurricane was predicted to hit the next day (Henri I believe). And there were no unicorns, hyenas or coups being planned, but there was a mission and for this we wind the clock back to the North Shore Frogmen dinner/meeting at the Mexacali Mexican Restaurant in Danvers on August 19th. Karen and I attended our first NSF meeting and met a bunch of nice people. One of those people, Vinny, stood up and asked for volunteers. A friend of Vinny's has a son in the Beverly Police Department who, the past weekend went to launch his boat from the Ferncroft Boat Ramp in Salem. Due to a mishap, not only was the boat launched, but the truck doing the launch was launched too! Luckily no one was hurt, but in addition to the truck getting destroyed, the officer's wallet that was in the driver's door at launch-time, was no longer there at truck-retrieval time. Somewhere in the area of the boat launch section was a missing wallet with his officer's badge inside... not a good thing. So Vinny was looking for volunteers to aid in the search. And a group of us said sure why not?

So, Saturday rolls around and a group of us show up at the dock. If I remember correctly, it was 5 Froggies and the officer's father, Dave - for shore support. Vinny had nicely arranged to get the OK from the Harbor Master and the State Police to dive at the boat launch. However, upon arrival the guy that runs the parking lot denied us the access to dive as everyone was pulling their boats out of the water for the aforementioned hurricane arriving the next day. So, I raised the possibility of doing a weeknight dive to find the wallet. In gratitude for showing up, Dave buys everyone drinks in addition to the cold drinks he brought with him. The night we decide on is Tuesday night. Dave, Fin, and I would be there.

Tuesday night, pleasant night, warm, little wind, decent water temp. Dave has cold drinks for us (I'm liking Dave!). So, the three of us discuss strategy, and suit up. My contribution to the search is a couple of reel lines, a dive flag, and a 6 AA cell battery flashlight. I glance over at the Mighty Fin donning a re-breather and he picks up an underwater metal detector! So, I'm thinking, why the heck am I even bothering? I might as well crawl back into the car and sneak home. But what the heck, after all Dave did bring cold sodas....

So, the strategy is, as there were no boats currently using the launch area, that the Mighty Fin was going to sweep the shallows right in front of the dock. But alas the wallet was not there. So, as I prepared to enter the fray I told Dave, "I suck at finding things, my money is on Fin." Dave's reply was, "Nope I think you're the one that will find it," makes me wonder what Dave was drinking! Even my wife, Karen, and her three sisters predicted I would find it, though Karen has been the recipient of many a lobster-less dive. So, I slip into the water and notice Fin has a nice search pattern going, paralleling the docks, so I decide to take a perpendicular pattern paralleling the launch ramp. On my second lap I notice, out of the corner of my left eye, something that looks unusual. Now this is the first time I have dove around a boat launch, but I realized everything is pretty flat in the muck. This object stuck up a tiny bit, like a mini tent. So, I swam over and son of a gun it's a wallet! So, I pick it up and open it up and there it is a police id, son of a sea biscuit! I might have found it! And just then along comes the Mighty Fin, 30 seconds later and he would be writing this article not me. So, I wave the wallet in front of his mask to let him know it's found and head to the dock to give it to Dave for verification. Sure, enough it was his son's wallet, he immediately called his wife, his son's girlfriend, and his son, they were very excited and thanked Fin and I many times over. I guess miracles do happen! So after that we all headed back to our vehicles and changed, I had a couple of victory sodas out of Dave's cooler (he can be my shore support any time)! Dave rewarded us

handsomely (quite unnecessary and definitely not expected – I’m really liking this guy he even paid for my parking at the launch), and we went home. This was quite a neat experience for me though apparently the club does a lot of muck diving, this was a first for me. I usually go lobster hunting around here or sightseeing in the Caribbean. I also learned that Fin has some mighty cool gear. It was a fun time and I look forward to more adventures with the NSF. It was great diving with you, Fin! Thanks again to Dave for trying to keep the boats from running over us and doing awesome shore support. Thanks to Vinny for setting it up, and to the other Froggies that showed up - I remember Bill...sorry I’m horrible at remembering names. Until next time, keep breathing! Frog Team 12 out.

Notice that went out to the Froggies

Search for a Lost Wallet

We were contacted to assist in the retrieval efforts of a lost wallet at the Kernwood Boat Ramp in Salem, MA. The wallet was in the door pocket of a truck, which went into the water (by accident) during a boat launch. When the truck door was open or during the removal of the truck from the water, the wallet fell into the water. The wallet contained a heavy object so it most likely sunk right away and would not have been affected too much by the tides on the Danvers River. It will be a shallow muck dive with limited visibility (similar to the lakes during our VT dive trip).

Date: Saturday, Aug 21st

Time: Noon (this is a very shallow river so doing it at high tide)

Where: Kernwood Boat Ramp (Base of the Kernwood Bridge in Salem, MA at the Kernwood McCabe Park Marina)

Cost: There may be a \$10 parking fee (or find street parking).



Grey Whale Experience

By: Susan Copelas

Grey whales migrate every year from the nutrient rich Arctic waters to their calving and breeding grounds 5000 miles away in San Ignacio lagoon off the coast of the Baja Peninsula. Traveling 5 miles per hour and up to 75 miles per day, they grow to over 40 feet and weigh in at 72,000 pounds fully matured. What makes this Eastern Pacific population of grey whales unique is their charismatic behavior upon arrival at San Ignacio Lagoon. Here, unlike anywhere else in the world, they are known for their curious and friendly behavior with humans, where they actually seek out, their onlooker for affection. What has always been the divers code, “look but don’t touch” does not hold true with these friendly mammals. Since 1974 Baja Expeditions have specialized in sustainable tourism and are pioneers in iconic adventures and ecological conservation. When I was there in February, a key time for the Grey Whale birthing of their calves, we were part of a team specializing in local research and education dedicated to ecological tourism. I have always dreamed, as many of us have, to get up real close to a whale, yet to pet or even kiss a whale was something I never imagined could happen, and yet it does. Nowhere else do the mothers bring the newly born calves to the boat, to include humans, in the nurturing process.



Turning the sightings into encounters is not the only unique thing about this experience. Arriving on the private air strip on a private chartered plane, being greeted with champagne on silver platters, and then ushering us to our private tent on the water’s edge—complete with running water, electricity, queen size bed, mattress and oriental carpets glamping at its best!! After spending the first afternoon with whale encounters, we returned to gourmet cuisine prepared by a local chef, shore bon fires, and serenades by locals playing local folk music typical of their ancestry, late into the night.

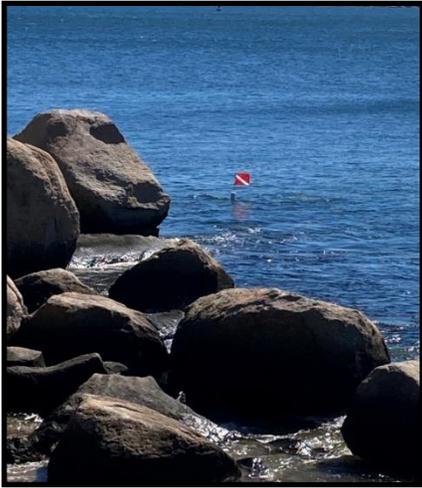
What a wonderful and magical experience. Thank you, Baja Expeditions!



Froggies Have Been Busy...

NSF Picnic – September 19th – Stage Fort Park

(Despite the blurry group photo) it was a picture-perfect day and absolutely splendid for diving, eating, and wonderful fellowship!

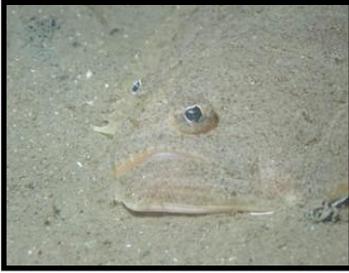


Sea Rovers – October 2nd & 3rd

The North Shore Frogmen booth was looking good and represented the club well - thank you Ray, Mary, and Dylan for all your effort!



Fall Night Dives



Blue crab from Ft. Wetherill



Bill and Ricardo



Pumpkin Dive – October 24th – Stage Fort Park



Thursday Night Meetings at Onion Town Grill



WE WANT YOU!

Club election time is nearly here with all slate positions open for 2022. Per section 10.1 of the NSF Bylaws: Nominations for elective office will be opened with the first regular Club meeting in November and will be closed one week before elections. Any regular member in good standing with at least one year of membership is eligible for an officer position. Please consider a leadership role in this great club. Positions available are: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The position of Air Bubbles Newsletter is also open. You may nominate yourself or other members of the club. Please attend any upcoming meeting to state your nomination or email to officers@northshorefrogmen.com.

The club can only work with your participation. If you have been a member in good standing for at least one year (as of December), please consider taking a leadership role.



Welcome New Member
and
Underwater Pumpkin
Carving Winner
Tim Waryas!

Save the Date
**President's Banquet December
4th**

Acapulco's in Beverly
Stay tuned for more Info

The North Shore Frogmen's Club
has business meetings and presentations every Thursday (except the last Thursday of the month) at Onion Town Grill, 175 Water St., Danvers. Join us for drinks/food at 6:00pm and meetings begin at 7:00PM. There are also social events and weekly Sunday dives!



Next Air Bubbles – January 15, 2022