

MASS BAY DIVERS

ISSUE 12

www.massbaydivers.com

DECEMBER 2008



147 Bridge Street
North Weymouth, MA 0219
email: MassBayDivers@hotmail.com

Letter From the President

Greetings from the Not President.

October was a good month for diving, because the weather remained nice and sunny. We've had lots of divers showing up every weekend. The Pumpkin Dive was a great success with many members participating. New this year was that it was a multi group event. The Officers would like to send a great THANK YOU to South Shore Divers, Diver's Market, and the Neptunes' for all the donations and help that were provided to make this year's event a great time. Also to Paula for spearheading the event. Good Job Paula! The Halloween Party was another success this year, with Wayne taking first place for the Best Costume. Thank you to Mike Vaughan and his Wife for hosting the party.

A few reminders of some upcoming activities:

- General Meeting at South Shore Divers on December 1, 2008 at 7:00pm.
Elections of Officers will be held.
- Officer's Meeting at South Shore Divers on January 2, 2009 at 7:00pm.
New Officer's must attend.
- General Meeting at South Shore Divers on January 5, 2009 at 7:00pm.
- Holiday Party at the Abington Ale House on January 24, 2009 at 7:00pm.

The Not President.

Next Officers' Meeting: Friday – January 2, 2009 @ 7:00 PM
Next General Meeting: Monday – December 1, 2008 @ 7:00 PM
Both meeting held at South Shore Divers

President	Rick Simpson	r.simpson44@yahoo.com
Vice President	Keith Eisenheuer	diving@ikebiker.com
Vice President	Keith Kirby	kk0013@comcast.net
Treasurer/Boat Coord.	Robin Scott	Ptwifehip123@aol.com
Recording Secretary	Arlene Anzuoni	aanzuoni@hellenichome.com
Corresponding Secretary	Wayne Ross	wrossma@aol.com
Membership coordinator	Robin Scott	Ptwifehip123@aol.com
Website Editor	Andrew Haley	Andy2525@aol.com
Newsletter Editor	Adrienne M.	yoamom@netzero.com
Events Coordinator	Sandi Ray	smr38@comcast.net



Welcome



MASS BAY DIVER'S BOUTIQUE

Items available for sale:

Tank tops in white, ash or navy

There are also embroidered items:

Baseball caps & T-shirts

Items will be available at each Club meetings

We can do special orders for sweatshirts & long-sleeve T-shirts just contact Sandy or John.

You can also take/purchase any item directly to A-1 in Weymouth for them to add the logo, just tell them you are a Mass bay Divers member.

Upcoming Dive Events

Dec 1st, 2008 – General Meeting

South Shore Divers, Inc.

Weymouth@7:00pm.

Jan 2nd, 2008 – Officer's Meeting

South Shore Divers, Inc.

Weymouth@7:00pm.

Jan 24th, 2009 – Holiday Party

Abington Ale House

Abington@7:00pm.



ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY

WHEN: January 24, 2009

WHERE: Abington Ale House
1235 Bedford Street
Abington, MA

TIME: 7:00PM TO 11:00PM

COST: \$30.00 PER PERSON

Tickets are on sale now. See Robin or any Officer to get your tickets.



Diver	Points
Mike Vaughn	71
Peter Ninh	66
Carol H.	49
Oleg K.	34
Bo H.	32
Bill Soto	31
Paula C.	31
Jon S.	30
Brian B.	29
Adrienne M.	25
Dennis B.	14
Matt B.	14
Mark W.	8

**CONGRATULATIONS TO MIKE VAUGHAN
2008 MASS BAY DIVER OF THE YEAR**



2009 New Officer Nominations and Elections

Nominations of Officers for 2009 will be at the November General Meeting. Some nominations were already accepted at the October meeting. They were as follows:

President: Keith Kirby and Dave Cangiano
 Vice President: Rick Simpson, Dave Cangiano
 Treasure: Robin Scott
 Recording Secretary: Arlene Anzouni
 Corresponding Secretary: Wayne Ross

**Elections of Officers for 2009 Officers
will be at the December General Meeting on December 1, 2008.**

Trip Report

By Dave Cangiano

Headed home now and I thought I'd get a head start on this trip report. I guess I didn't spend enough time in the tropics. Island time is already a distant memory and I can still see St. Maarten from a couple miles up. I'll start the story of our live-aboard voyage on [Explorer Ventures' Caribbean Explorer II](#) from St. Maarten. If you are interested in the review of the flight down, let me know and I'll forward you a copy of what I sent US Airways. Anyway, the Delta flight successfully landed with all six of us. Mike, Jerry, Al, Arlene, Lori and I all cleared customs and immigration quickly. From there we easily hailed a cab. After a short ride through downtown St. Maarten and unfortunately passing by the [Bada Bing](#), we arrived at Bobby's Marina. We met our cheerful crew and quickly dispatched our various bags to their appropriate locations. Once unpacked and our gear was set up we had a couple hours to kill before dinner and the Captain's briefing. Happy hour was calling, so it was off to the local watering hole for an appetizer and a boat drink.

Later that evening we all regrouped in the boat's salon for our first of many excellent dinners. This night we were served grilled sirloin with various sides. All the meals were great, nothing too crazy, and if you didn't find anything to your liking, Zach was more than happy to make you something you would enjoy.

After dinner we were formally introduced to the crew by Captain Dave. Nissa, Jay-sen and Dawn would be our dive deck crew. Ryan was in charge of keeping the boat clean and tidy. Zach the cook kept us well fed. Bill the engineer kept the rooms cool and the compressors running, along with dealing with all the other things that keep a boat floating and moving forward. Captain Dave gave the requisite safety briefing and explained that Hurricane Omar had blown through the area about 10 days ago. It had done some damage to the reefs. However, he was not sure how extensive the damage was because they had not had a chance to dive many of the sites since the storm. There would be five dives a day, so we would have plenty of opportunity to assess it. From there it was a few more drinks, a snack and off to bed.

The cabins in the boat were small. Think bathroom size, with a bathroom where the bathtub belongs. Remember, it's a boat, not a ship. It was clean, cool, and dry and there was a bed, so I quickly got over it and moved on. As it turns out, I wouldn't be spending much time there. There was diving to do, along with island tours, food to eat and alcohol to drink. That doesn't leave much time for napping, so no need for much space.

When we awoke the next day we were moored off Saba, a small island somewhere south of St. Maarten. Some people say it is a beautiful island, but I think Mike described it best "It's a rock." Actually I think it is an extinct volcano, most of the islands in the area are. This particular "rock" appears from the boat to be taller than it is wide. I believe 5 square miles of land area and nearly 3000 feet tall. There are more goats that inhabit the island than humans. The land tour was incredible. The roads seem to go straight up. Amazingly they were all built by hand. It took nearly 20 years. The Island is also home of the world's shortest international airport runway, the "usable" runway length measures just under 1000 feet. Technically the runway is closed, but it can be, and frequently is, used by applying for a special permit. One look at it made me glad we flew into St. Maarten. There is also at least one pub. The diving on Saba was excellent, everything you would expect of Caribbean diving. There truly was something for everyone. Small nudibranches to reef sharks, shallow reefs to deep blue diving are all found there. We remained in Saba for three days.

Next stop Statia or St. Eustatus or the Golden Island... there were a few others I have forgotten. This island was not what I expected. Headed in from the North, it reminded me more of the pictures I had seen of Kuwait than an island paradise. The shoreline was littered with oil storage tanks and the harbor was lined with tankers. The land tour revealed that Statia was the richest Island in the Caribbean until the end of the triangle slave trade. Since then it has suffered. It is now a fuel depot of sorts. The single hull ships bringing crude oil from South America empty their cargo there and pick up refined product. Double hull freighters from the United States drop off the refined product and pick up the crude to bring back for refining. So the north end of the Island has become somewhat of a huge gas station. Luckily there is a lot of history on the island and the museum was interesting. If you were going to skip a land tour this would be the one. Again the diving was excellent. The sites were a little shallower. There seemed to be less damage from the storm here.

Statia's reefs are protected by a Marine Park and all diving must be accompanied by a park guide. Nothing too spectacular, we just had to stay together in a group. Tough for taking pictures though, but I suffered through it.

Because of the Marine Park fee and nowhere to moor, we left Statia the same day we arrived. Again headed south, we arrived at St. Kitts late Wednesday night, our final stop. St Kitts is a more typical cruise ship destination. The type of Island that is alive and well downtown while there is a ship in port, but a bit run down in most of the rural areas. I think my impression may be a bit skewed because of Omar, but it didn't seem like anyone was in a hurry to clean up. Again, as with Statia, the island is rich with history and tradition. Diving here was a bit different. The two reefs we dove on the North West side were beat. There were piles of trash and decaying coral and sponges in most of the low areas. Plenty of fish life, but I got the feeling they were all looking for a place to live. Again, thanks to Omar. I think these areas will recover and be beautiful dive sites again, but they will need time. On the South end of the island we dove two beautiful wreck sites. These areas were alive and well, but the visibility was marginal for the tropics. More like what we hope to find in Gloucester but rarely do... 30-40 feet. They say the area is typically 50-60 feet, so not too far off the norm.

One night spent at the dock with dinner ashore. We ate a place called Stone Walls. The food was excellent but the service was a bit slow, remember island time. Back on the boat for a few drinks, after all we didn't want the crew to think we didn't appreciate the free Rhum, then to bed. The next morning a quick breakfast then pack our stuff for the 9:00am departure from the boat. That was fine except we had a 4:30pm departure from the airport. A quick stroll around town revealed nothing interesting, so it was off to the Marriot for some fun. The Marriot on St. Kitts is the perfect way to off-gas while waiting for your plane; Restaurants, stores and a casino.

Over all the week was good. The weather was just about perfect. Days were in the 80's with scattered clouds. Nights were mild in the 70's. The ocean was calm to small waves (2-3'), nothing that made diving difficult. There was current on most dives, but again nothing too difficult to deal with. It was just enough to reinforce the idea that dives should be started headed into the current. The ocean temperature was somewhere around 82-84` top to bottom depending on whose computer you believe. I was never cold in a pair of shorts and lycra shirt. The boat was comfortable, but not overly spacious. If you have ever been on their Turks and Caicos Explorer II, you may be a bit disappointed with this boat. That and the condition of some of the dive sites kept the week from scoring perfect.

Well it's getting dark now. I think we're somewhere off the coast of Florida, headed to Charlotte, NC. We are unquestionably somewhere between where I want to be and where I am headed. I hear it is 29` in Boston, balmy.