

NAUI SOURCES

Dive Safety Through Education

December 23rd, 2021 Edition

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Cover Photo By: Kyle Kraiker



The Magazine Made By Members,
For Members

Please Note:

All Photos Used in this Newsletter are From NAUI Members!

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Photo Credit To: Brian Backland

Divers: Kyle Kraiker, Jenn Kraiker, Owen Kraiker, and Evelyn Kraiker

Join the NAUI Video Contest!

Would you like to be part of our next marketing campaign?

Make a video that is approximately 3 minutes maximum in length to fit the title of: Why Dive? Why NAUI?

The winning video will be part of our 2022 recruitment campaign and will be part of our Members' Resource Folder. Please upload your video by January 15th 2022. We will be selecting and announcing the winner in the January 20th 2022 edition of NAUI Sources and featuring the video.

If you have a video to send, please We Transfer it to marketing@nauai.org. Be sure to give us a brief description of the video, what is happening, and the names of those in the video. Thank you.

If you have any questions, please contact Bill Doran at bdoran@nauai.org.

NAUI Video Contest Winner

Congratulations to Eric Alo for his video on

"Why Dive? Why NAUI?".

Check out his video here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AMj_HqslOpc



Featured Photo for this Issue!



Photo Taken By: Kyle Kraiker

Award Recognitions

Oustanding Service Award:

- Lawrence D. Schaller #11653 (USA)
- Nicholas Nechay #60788 (USA)
- Matt Stow #61644 (South Africa)
- Yiannakis M. Mylonas #57089 (Cyprus)
- Todd Shannon #10986 (Canada)
- James Hollis #12437 (USA)
- Derek M. Dunning #61675 (South Africa)
- Brian Stanley #61440 (USA)
- Billy Walls #59902L (USA)
- Nelson P. De. C. Pereira #30441 (Australia)
- Nasser F.O. Al-Othman #35019 (Kuwait)
- Selim Mjaess #46160 (Lebanon)
- Fahad N. Alothman #47100 (Kuwait)
- Kenneth R. Mejean #49622 (USA)

Continued Service Award:

Palung Yimphanich #6652L (Thailand)

Next Generation Award:

- Nicole Zelek #61906 (USA)
- Alyssa Bellamy #61270 (USA)

Environmental Enrichment Award:

- Youssef Ali Jundi #57437 (Lebanon)
- Nancy Caruso #50147 (USA)

Award Recognitions

Hall of Honor:

- Bernard Fuersich #8940 (USA)
- Jeffrey Heim #10880 (USA)
- David Ochs #15918L (USA)

Albert Pierce Medal for Heroism:

Floyd E. Holcom #48075L (USA)

Honorary Member:

Mario Cyr (Canada)

Lifetime Achievement Award:

- Walter "Butch" Hendrick #1724L (USA)
- Michael Tong #7865L (Malaysia)

Next Generation Award:

- Nicole Zelek #61906 (USA)
- Alyssa Bellamy #61270 (USA)

Diving the Blue Grotto

Right now, everyone is dreaming of a diving getaway.

You can have your tropical vacations to the Bahamas, Barbados or Bermuda – but I will take another B: Blue Grotto.

The Blue Grotto Dive Resort is located in Williston, Florida, which is about forty minutes off the I-75 highway, a major thoroughfare that travels between Detroit, Michigan and Miami, Florida.

Like many dive sites that are off the beaten path, sometimes you need a fellow diver to recommend it to you. That occurred for me for the first time in February 2011 and I instantly was hooked. So much so that I visited again in 2014 and 2015!

When you first drive into the site, it is time to register at the front desk. As always, you need to make sure to have your certification and your logbook ready to present. A great advantage for instructors in particular is that there is an onsite pool and classroom available for one's teaching needs. There's also a fill station so you can do your "one stop diving" needs.

Blue Grotto, like many places offers a variety of diving options – from open water up to technical dive training. You should start – as you always should – by checking out your dive site. It is a short walk down the steps to see your entry point off the floating dock into the clear water.



There are three distinct levels in Blue Grotto. The first is the Open Water level, which reaches depths of 40 feet or 12 metres. This is a great starting destination for new and not yet very experienced divers – and it seems to be the mostly likely chance for divers to see Virgil the Turtle who is quite friendly and is happy to be approached!

The second is called the Upper Cavern which has a feature called Peace Rock and goes a bit further than the Open Water level. It also has an amount of artifacts spread throughout the cavern at this depth. One cannot discuss Blue Grotto without mentioning the air bell, which features windows all around and a supply of breathable air that is pumped from the surface.

The third is the lower chamber. This is only for those who are diving at higher levels that have specialized training and are using specialized equipment. There is limited light so this depth is clearly not for open water level divers. Now it is the time to go for a dive! You have checked off all the items on our pre-dive check list and speaking of checking things off – you make sure to complete your buddy checks. Safety first everyone!

Diving the Blue Grotto

You complete a perfectly executed giant stride entry and find ourselves floating at the surface. You are good to go; it's time to descend. You take some time to look around at your surroundings. You first are enamored by the view; it's clear everywhere. A site like this doesn't tend to change much visibility-wise; you are not worried about waves or when the tide is going to roll in or out. Such is the benefit of an open-water dive site that in theory has its limits (although they are huge limits to boot).

You notice that you need to do some adjustments so you swim with your buddy over to one of the platforms. You adjust the straps on your BC once more to be sure. This site has several platforms that can be used for various levels of training and for adjustments.

You and your buddy also take the time to double check your minimum two lights and redundancy as you are planning to explore all aspects that Blue Grotto has to offer. It is important to note that in general that lights are not just for night dives but rather they also give benefits to areas that have lower light penetration from the surface but also that nook and cranny where that superb fish is hanging out. You should also be taking two lights with you. A dive buddy of mine was doing a Blue Grotto dive many years ago and encountered someone who didn't have a light and was in a bit of a difficult situation – he was diving with more than two lights and happily lent one of his spare lights to the diver in question.

Now that your lights are confirmed on and functioning, you are fully ready to start. You and your buddy navigate towards the overhang that is directly in front of you. You explore the rock formation and are fascinated to think about how these rocks got here and how they became specifically formed. You also see a small statue placed in a tiny crevice and it makes you think of a similar statue in the scuba park back home.



Diving the Blue Grotto

You then move onto the air bell. While the dive bell is spacious you and your dive buddy in your pre-dive planning have decided it's one diver at a time. You've never been in a diving bell so you enjoy the sensation – not to mention that because your regulator is out of your mouth and you're breathing surface supplied air so you can extend your dive by just a bit more. With that being said you also realize that being in the dive bell is not a substitute for you planning your dive with the air that you have with you in your tank and then diving that plan as intended.

Since you and your buddy have your advanced diver certifications, you have planned to descend down to some deeper parts of the site to see what Blue Grotto has to offer you in the lower sections. One of the things you make sure to do is to turn around and look up. You are very aware that although access to the surface always exists that as you descend that it does not always seem that way. On this dive, however, the light is especially bright and you enjoy the sun's rays that are penetrating the water.

When you reach the depth of your next part of your dive, you realize that you are in an area that has some parts that are a bit more of a tight squeeze. You make a note of talking to your instructor about taking a sidemount diving course that you always hear them talking about. You also realize that you are at the deepest part of the site that you are allowed to access; you see signage warning you about those small spaces and start your ascent.

As a good diver, you are making sure to complete multiple small safety stops on the way up you take some time to visit Peace Rock at 50 feet. While stopping there you once again take the time to marvel at the beauty of the dive site that you have had the opportunity to dive.

Near the surface, you finish off your final safety stop (15 feet/6 metres for three minutes) and you meet up with Virgil the turtle. Virgil the turtle strikes you on this dive as a wonderful creature who has places to go as she take the time to bless you with her presence. You've heard that at times he is gone for weeks or months at a time so you're happy that you have this encounter with the resident social butterfly (or maybe social butterflyfish?).



After you and your buddy breach the surface and tell each other that you had a great dive. It's true – you both had a particular highlight during your time underwater. You climb back on the platform and start making your way back up the steps to the main area.

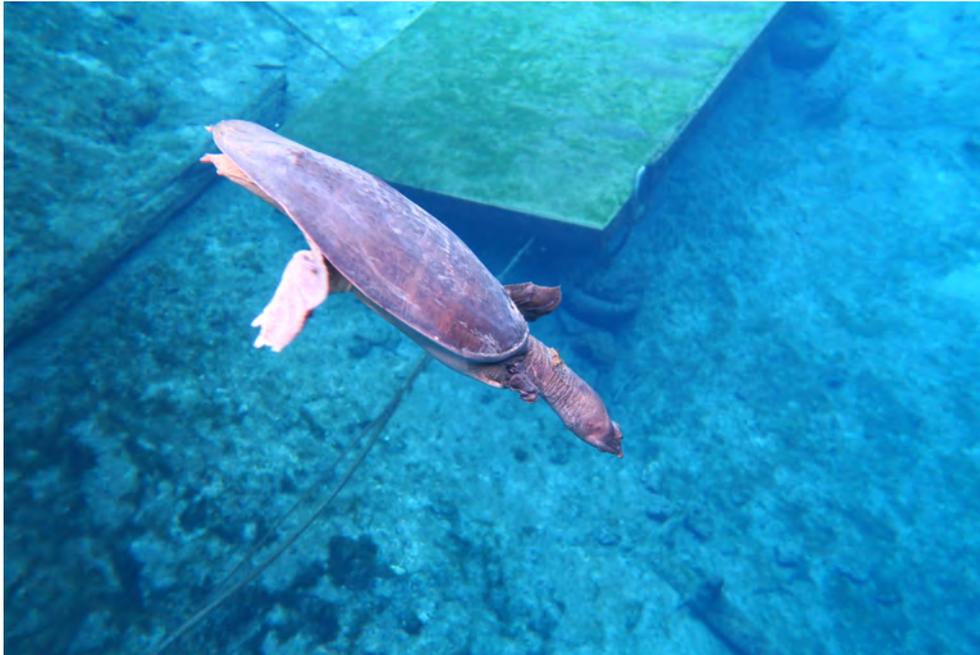
When you get back to your car (or perhaps your cabin if you are staying on site) you take the time to talk to your non-diver friends and exchange stories. You hear that they went for a swim in the pool and took the time to walk around the site topside and taken in the natural beauty of it all.

Diving the Blue Grotto

While this is not a point to point Google map style dive that I've ever taken, I hope that this simulation has given you time to reflect of what a dive at Blue Grotto might end up being. The great thing is that Blue Grotto is central to other northern Florida sites – you would do well by visiting Devil's Den, Paradise Springs, Manatee Springs and Ginnie Springs. They are worth the drive from Blue Grotto (all within an a few hour's drive) and each offer wonderful diving.

So what are you waiting for? Take some time to talk to your buddy and plan a visit to Blue Grotto!

Some information for this article was taken from Blue Grotto's official website – www.divebluegrotto.com – which is chock full of information and well worth a click or two when planning your upcoming visit!



A Note of Thanks

This year has been both challenging and productive. Many of you throughout the world are still shut down and waiting to see how we come away from the COVID lockdowns. For those that were fortunate enough to operate, I am sure it has been difficult. Difficult times call for hard work and innovation, for many, that brought rewards and a new understanding for how we navigate our industry going forward.

The NAUI team both in your service center and at World Wide Headquarters in Tampa have spent this time working hard to make it better for you as we move to the future. If you have not done so, then please attend the next Member Update or go to CORE and watch one of the recorded sessions. I believe you will be surprised at what the NAUI team has done for you this past year. Stay abreast by reading your updates from NAUIWW and the social media updates.

Anytime there are challenges, there will be those who only complain about how bad things are and that no one is doing anything to help them. Please don't join that team. Negative people only work at sucking the energy from people that are working hard to make things better. Facebook can be a magnet to complainers and whiners, when you see those types of people attacking ask what they are doing to make things better or an even better idea is to ignore them and not engage. Spread light on their dark thoughts and concentrate on making your operation the best it can be. Imagine, if each NAUI instructor or Course Director taught just one more student than last year what our growth could be.

As we move towards 2022 join me in thanking the people who kept NAUI moving forward. To the many members who served on committees and subcommittees, thank you for helping shape NAUI's future. Thank you to our team members who keep the certifications moving and materials shipping. Reach out to your NAUI representative, your service center and the staff at NAUI WW and let them know you appreciate the work they do for us. Get the information from the Member Update and you will realize what they have done for all of us this year.

Thanks for being NAUI! I wish each of you Happy Holidays and a prosperous 2022.

Best of luck in 2022!

Danny Grizzard

NAUI Board Chairman

2022 Membership Renewal Time!

This past year worldwide, we have seen some great works in providing new and improved services to our members and their students, and there is so much more to come in the next year.

If you have not already done so, please take the time to renew your membership for the coming year and continue enjoying the benefits of your NAUI membership today!

The process is simple. One method is to log into the NAUI website at nau.org. After you log in, you will see the renew button near the top right of the screen.

For other options or assistance, please contact your Service Center or Member Services.



Join Us for the Next NAUI Talk

Join our next NAUI Talk on Tuesday, January 4th at 2 pm Eastern time, where we will have a presentation and discussion on NAUI's New Mobile Training Team.

NAUI Talk sessions are run by our host Bill Doran, NAUI Worldwide Marketing Director, and guest speakers. These are thirty minutes to one-hour fact-filled themes that assist, support, and build our NAUI members and the businesses. So, invest a few minutes and gain valuable information.

During this session, you will gain from topics such as:

- What is the NAUI Mobile Training Team.
- How does the NAUI Mobile Training Team work.
- How can you benefit from the Mobile Training Team.

Also, the time is in the Eastern time zone; don't forget to click and change the time zone (in blue) to match your local time zone when registering.

We can't wait to have you join this event!

Use the link and sign up now! Feel free to pass this link to your fellow divers!

Please Click Here to Sign Up:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_7G8GCCSGTvOJKbDDGVyXzg



Check out Previous sessions of NAUI Talk by going to NAUI TV :

<https://www.youtube.com/c/NAUITV/videos>



Kenneth J. Hoser – Adaptive Diving Association

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Kenneth J. Hoser, Adaptive Diving Association

By Gene Muchanski, Executive Director

Dive Industry Association, Inc.

December 20, 2021

Kenneth J. Hoser, Executive Director & Founder of Adaptive Diving Association passed away at his home on December 8, 2021, after a long battle with cancer. His Service is scheduled for Saturday, January 22, 2022 at 2:00 pm at New Hanover United Methodist Church, 211 Swamp Pike, Gilbertsville, Pennsylvania.

Over the years, Kenneth worked in the adaptive diving market helping a large number of amputees, people with spinal cord injuries and others who explored the benefits of adaptive sports as a means of rehabilitation. He worked with returning Veterans suffering with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and helped them participate in his Adaptive SCUBA Diving programs.

Through the Adaptive Diving Association, Kenneth not only used adaptive SCUBA diving programs as a means of therapy, he also designed specialized adaptive SCUBA equipment to make it safer for those with physical challenges to participate in the zero-gravity environment. While training adaptive divers and designing equipment to meet their needs is truly a remarkable accomplishment, Kenneth took it one step further and conducted dive trips to Dive Resort Destinations where properly trained and equipped participants got to experience, firsthand, the joys of diving the warm waters of the Caribbean.

The world has truly lost an Adaptive Diving Pioneer.

Adaptive Diving Association: Adaptive Diving Association is a 501(c)(3) Non-profit Organization that specializes in tending to the individual needs of the diver who needs adaptive training, including those who are wheel-chair-bound. This includes specialized training, custom fabricated adaptive equipment and underwater video taping for self-evaluation. Visit Adaptive Diving Association at www.adaptivedivingassociation.org



With sadness, we announce the passing of NAUI Member Mike Brady from a heart condition on Thursday, December 16, 2021. Mike was well known and respected by many of us. Please read in bio from CORE as it says so much of what he gave to us all. The passion for sharing his passion for diving!

Bio in CORE: You expressed an interesting learning how to scuba dive or to further your dive training. Now you should select a dive instructor who will teach and guide you to gain the skill and confidence to improve your diving! I teach scuba privately, and for many years served as the faculty advisor for scuba at Florida Atlantic University (FAU) and Florida International University (FIU). I also teach health and safety classes (CPR, First Aid, Emergency Oxygen). I teach people to become instructors.



NAUI Partners with Force Blue

Putting America's Military Veterans in Water, On Mission

January 2022 Launch

www.forceblueteam.org/outposts

In an effort to include more veterans in its mission to preserve and restore, NAUI is teaming up with Force Blue to encourage U.S. military veterans who would like to become “**Force Blue Assistant Scientific Divers**” and undergo SCUBA training through a network of Force Blue “Outposts” across the country.

Who is Force Blue?

Force Blue, a 501c3 nonprofit, made up entirely of military-training combat divers drawn exclusively from the Special Operations ranks, will utilize the Force Blue Outpost Program to give those veterans, who may not have been divers during their military careers, the change to deploy alongside Force Blue Scientific Divers on future marine conservation Missions.



Becoming a Force Blue Assistant Scientific Diver

To become a Force Blue Assistant Scientific Diver, candidates must first possess at least a Rescue Diver certification from an accredited dive training organization. For many through, this prerequisite training can be cost prohibitive. Now through the Force Blue Outpost Program, veterans can use their educational benefits to pay for any/all of their dive training - including their Force Blue Assistant Scientific Diver certification - at an approved NAUI VA Testing Center.

Let Your Military Service Serve You!

Through a program recently established between NAUI and the Veterans Administration, veterans can now use their G.I. Bill education benefits to fund their dive training, certifications and licenses. Service members who qualify can use one month of G.I. Bill benefits per certification or license exam and can progress as far as they like - from Basic Open Water Diver to Divemaster, NAUI Instructor, even Course Director!

Those veterans who have received at least their Rescue Diver Certification, have logged at least 100 recreational dives and possess current certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), Automated External Defibrillator (AED), First Aid and Oxygen Emergency Provider training — and are willing to provide a copy of their DD214 — are eligible to take the FORCE BLUE Assistant Scientific Diver course through a registered FORCE BLUE Outpost.

Become a Force Blue Assistant Scientific Diver!

Veteran divers who have met all the pre-requisites (listed above) will have the opportunity to join FORCE BLUE and to deploy alongside FORCE BLUE Scientific Divers on future marine conservation missions once they have completed the FORCE BLUE Assistant Scientific Diver (ASD) Course.

The FORCE BLUE ASD Course includes a 20-hour online academic component that covers topics such as observation and data collection and reporting, sampling protocols and identification of fish, invertebrate and algae species — as well as four (4) open water dives to assess candidates' identification and underwater survey skills.

To begin your dive training and to start the process of becoming a FORCE BLUE Assistant Scientific Diver via a FORCE BLUE Outpost, visit: www.forceblueteam.org/outposts

Announcements / News

Check out what NAUI Members are doing and let us list your events on the NAUI Sources Site. These can be courses, Environmental Clean Ups, or more. Simply email your event information to marketing@nauai.org and help us keep NAUI divers informed.

<https://sources.nauai.org/category/news/>



Credit: wahyumul

Promote your events!

Take a look at upcoming courses, environmental cleanups, special events and more.

Don't forget to tell us about your events so that we can list them too. Simply email your event information to marketing@nauai.org and help us keep NAUI divers informed.

<https://www.nauai.org/events/>



Credit: Carolyn Wagner

SCUBA Industry Careers – Check the NAUI jobs!

Looking for a career change? Are you looking for a NAUI Dive Professional? This is the place to go.

Posting career opportunities is simple. All you need to do is to email the job title, description, location and who interested members should contact to marketing@nauai.org and we will get the message out to NAUI members.

<https://www.nauai.org/careers/>



Credit: Alvanir S. Oliveira



That's All for this
Week, But... For NAUI
Sources to Continue to
Provide an Amazing
Magazine, We Need Help
from You!

Send in your Articles, Photos, Events, and
Anything Else that you want to share with the
rest of the NAUI Community, we look forward to
receiving your content, which you can send to
marketing@nau.org.