

Inside this issue:

- March Notes **1**
- Wine And Cheese **1**

MARCH NOTES - That Time of Year

The trees are starting to bud which means two things, first we will get another arctic cold front to kill the buds, second it's time to check our dive gear before prime diving season. As I have personally run into a few issues this past year so I thought I might remind people about a few specifically.

The second stage of my regulator sounds like a 5th grader on a trumpet. So 1st in line, get regulator overhauled or at least inspect it well. Check the mouth piece for bite issues. It's been a couple of years for mine so I think I am in for the full overhaul.

My BC had a couple of issues, things learned: Check the bladder if removable, check to be sure it is still pliable and that valve connections are still solidly attached. This is a good time to clean it, I like to use mouthwash and if you dove in a Zebra Mussel lake it's also good to do a light bleach solution first inside and out. Be sure to rinse well afterwards. If you can, disassemble, clean and lubricate your inflator mechanism. Make sure attachments for weight pockets and attachment points where you clip other gear are in good condition.

Last month in Lake Murray, I found out my wet suit gloves had worn a bit thin. Avoid this chilly mistake and check that your gloves and

booties are OK, even if used for warm water it's better to check now then at the edge of the thermo cline. Check fin straps for cracks, tears, if you need some, pass on the "save a dive" strap and get a couple of real replacements from your local dive shop, especially if you have a blue water trip scheduled.

Dive computer batteries should be maintained according to manufacturers recommendation. Mine are self serviced so I do this at a clean table, use a clean lint free cloth to clean the 'O' ring and I only lightly grease the ring with silicone grease. More than likely the 'O' ring is OK, but if there is any doubt, get a new one. If your dive computer has had a lot of use and is several years old, you might want to consider relegating it to backup. You don't want this to give up while on a live aboard or at 80 feet in Cayman.

Lastly if you have any tanks, check their Hydrostat date and visual inspection date, have tested or inspected before you will need them.

Anything you are not willing to risk your life on, should be checked by an expert at your local dive shop. Best done by an authorized dealer for whatever device you are having overhauled. If you have any questions ask your local dive shop.

Arctic Wine & Cheese Dive Outing - Steve Ogden

The 2019 edition of the annual Arctic Dive & Wine and Cheese Party joint club outing was held on the weekend of February 23 and 24 at the Marietta Landing campground in Lake Murray State Park in south central Oklahoma. The event was sponsored by the Diving Rebels Scuba Club with participation by the Scubadillo Dive Club.

A very significant contrast between this year's event and that of last year was the residual moisture. Last year, there was an extended

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dry spell experienced by north Texas as well as a good part of Oklahoma for most of the previous three to four months such that the Oklahoma governor's office had imposed a burn ban on the western half of Oklahoma that included Lake Murray and the surrounding area. Then for several days leading up to the outing, the skies opened up and the drought was broken in a very dramatic way with record-setting rainfall of almost diluvian proportions. In fact, last year, the rain did not completely exit the DFW area until about 1 PM the day of the outing. Because the burn ban was in effect when I left my house last year, I did not bring the trailer load of wood that I had loaded over a period of a few months as I did not want to take a chance of pulling the trailer full of wood to the lake and then having to haul it back home again. But upon arriving at the lake, I learned that the burn ban had been lifted about 30 minutes previously.



The increase in attendance this year was reflective of the pleasant weather as we had over 30 folks join us, up from the 20-some from last year. Scubadillo Dive Club attendance was way down since a number of their members were on a dive trip to Bonaire. Also as a result of better weather, we had about half a dozen hardy souls participate in dives in the chilly waters of Lake Murray.



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Page Title
Page Title
Page Title
Page Title
Page Title

themed T-shirt and a dive beanie. Unfortunately, no bids for these items were made and the Scubadillo dive club did not realize any revenue from the silent auction. A special thanks goes to Travis Wells of the Diving Rebels for the use of his pop-shelter and tarps for wind protection that served as the venue for the silent auction.

Our wine and cheese contest attracted 11 entrants for the red wine category, four white wine entrants and 12 cheese entrants. The wines and cheeses were rated on a scale of 1 - 7 by an astute (??) panel of judges, with one being the best and 7 being pretty awful. The scores from the judges (five for the wines and six for the cheeses) were totaled and the two lowest scores for each category were awarded first and second places. The one wine with the highest score from both wine categories was recognized as the worst wine.

The wine and cheese contest results are listed below.

Best Red Wine

	<u>Winner Name</u>	<u>Winner Club</u>	<u>Winner Label</u>
1st Place :	Elizabeth Neumann	Rebels	L'Authentique
2nd Place :	Linda Magnuson	Rebels	19 Crimes

Best White Wine

	<u>Winner Name</u>	<u>Winner Club</u>	<u>Winner Label</u>
1st Place :	Danny Barentine	Rebels	Buttery Bomb
2nd Place :	Dale Romack	Rebels	Yellowtail Chardonnay

Worst Wine

	<u>Loser Name</u>	<u>Loser Name</u>	<u>Loser Name</u>
Last Place :	Dale Romack	Rebels	Holiday Spiced Wine (Homemade)

1st Place	Elizabeth Neumann	R
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Best Cheese

The first and second place winners received gift certificates and gift cards of \$30 and \$20, respectively. The worst wine "loser" also received a \$20 gift card. In contrast to last year, when the Scubadillos dominated the wine and cheese awards, Kathleen Chase winner of the best cheese presented the only Diner to win this year. Battered Buns goes to Richard Dean, owner of Adventure Scuba in Plano, who donated \$70 in gift cards to his shop. Richard generously did this in spite of the fact that, if you have not heard, Adventure Scuba was burglarized at the end of January and over \$17,000 in merchandise was stolen. So if you are in the Plano area, be sure and stop by the shop and thank Richard.

The wine and cheese contest was followed by a wonderful meal primarily prepared and assembled by Elizabeth Neumann and Jim Magnuson. We dined on delicious turkey and pulled pork, baked potatoes, cole slaw, beans and rolls as well as scrumptious brownies and cookies. If anyone went away hungry, it was their own fault. We collected \$355 from the sale of meal tickets.

Page Title
Page Title
Page Title
Page Title
Page Title

After the close of the silent auction, we finished off day with as the raffle around the blazing bonfire. We raffled off several of the items from the silent auction that had not received bids and were generic type items that would be useful to anyone such as an Aqua Maraca. We also had three \$20 gift certificates donated by Scuba Toys. Since we had food left over from the dinner, we packaged four zip lock bags of pulled pork and included them in the raffle also. We collected \$112 from the raffle.

While it turned a bit chilly later in the day and into the evening when the wind turned to coming from the north, it was a very enjoyable event and thanks to all who made it there - we had a good time. This year for the first time in memory, nobody spent the night at the campground, preferring either to head back home or to stay in the new lodge or in a cabin. Speaking of the new lodge - it is beautiful and only two years old. Some of us had the breakfast buffet there and it was really delicious, so I would recommend it.

Photographs of the event follow. Thanks to Connie Griffin of the Diving Rebels for these photographs.

Steve "Oggie" Ogden, Outing Coordinator



Linda Magnuson - 2nd place for best



Dale Romack with his nasty worst wine



Kathleen Cherry - 1st place best cheese



Becky Marak - 2nd place best cheese



Elizabeth's turkey and pulled pork ready for eating



Fixin's, sides and deserts



Oggie's trailer load of wood that sat for a year



Folks gathered around the bonfire



Joseph Parker getting ready for a dive



Elizabeth and Becky choosing entertainment.