



Four Lakes Scuba Club Newsletter

Volume 42

Issue 4

April 2020

This Month's Meeting Online Meeting Through Zoom

Wednesday, April 8, 7:00pm

[Meeting Link](#)

Meeting ID: 192 424 847

Password: 86421379

Unfortunately, but probably not surprisingly, the Four Lakes Scuba Club will not be physically meeting this month due to the ongoing pandemic and the "Safer at Home" order. However, we are going to attempt to do a virtual happy hour over Zoom instead. Please join us from the comfort of your own home on Wednesday at 7:00. If you're not familiar with the Zoom app, you can get more information on their [website](#). Hope to see you then!

Thank you!

Thank you to our March speaker, Greg, for presenting an interesting history of the USS Newbern. He also brought in a display of artifacts he found on the wreck (shown below).



Looking Ahead

At this time, we are unsure which (if any) planned club events for the next few months (meetings, clean up dives, picnics, etc.) will be cancelled. The board is waiting to make these decisions, as it is difficult to say what health recommendations will be in place in the future. Please keep an eye on our communications (the club's facebook page, emails, and newsletter) for the latest information as we go forward.

Club membership dues will not be collected in May as they normally are. We will collect them at a later meeting this year.

Trip Report: Roatan, Honduras 2020 (AKA: We came, we saw, we stayed and stayed and stayed)

By John Fafinski

Team Jellen had a trip planned for April 14th to the 21st to Roatan Honduras. We were debating on whether to cancel the trip due to the spread of the covid-19. We checked the CDC, WHO, the State Department and our employee health. At that time Roatan had zero known cases of covid and all the places said since it's not a high-risk area it should be fine to go. We boarded the plane in Milwaukee, had a 50-minute layover in Houston and then on to Roatan. We stayed at the Coco View Resort and we were met in the airport by their staff and we were transferred to the resorts dock. The resort is on a little island, so we had to take a short boat ride to get to the resort area. We were quickly brought to our room. We had an over the water cabana. It was a fairly large room with a porch over the water. In the evening we headed to the bar area for a mandatory orientation where they talked about the resort and diving. After the orientation we headed down to dinner. Each meal is served buffet style and there was always a good variety. Because of the risk of covid the staff did all the serving instead of letting the guests touch the serving utensils. They had a supply of hand sanitizer located throughout the restaurant and bar area. The first few meals we sat at table for 2 but after a few days we weren't noticing and signs of covid, so we started eating with our boat mates. On Sunday we did a check out dive from shore. Coco View is on a channel, one side of the channel is Newman's wall, the other side is Coco View wall. In the middle of the channel is a shipwreck and a plane wreck. They have a set of underwear buoys that

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Diversions Scuba Update from Tami

Although Diversions is closed for the duration of the outbreak, we are offering lots of opportunities to keep our scuba friends engaged during this time when we're staying safer at home.

CLASSES:

- PADI has slashed the prices on all of their e-learning through the end of April. If you have a friend that you'd like to get into diving or a continuing education course that you're interested in taking, you should get started on it during this time at home- DON'T WAIT! Diversions' online portal can be found [here](#).
- DAN Instructor Gayle is offering FREE access to the online portions of all of DAN's First-Aid classes. If you are interested in one of DAN's courses, contact us and we'll get you registered. Now is a great time to refresh your first-aid knowledge.

GEAR:

- Tami has been working with our suppliers to offer some awesome deals on in-stock equipment and we'll be posting on Facebook a gear deal of the week. Also, if there's something that you saw in the store that you think you'd like, contact us. We'll make a deal – please help us move our store inventory to pay our rent and utilities!
- In market for gear of your own and looking for a steal? We are selling off some of our "pre-loved" rental equipment- reach out to us for sizes and availability.

FACEBOOK FUN:

- Divemaster Biz continues to provide Thursday Facebook live updates on what's new at Diversions Online.
- Divemaster Andy is holding a WTF (What's That Fish) contest every Wednesday. See if you can guess the fish of the week, or submit your own photos for assistance with fish ID.
- Instructor Ben is giving mini-dive lectures on Facebook Live every other week. Next up, on April 14 at 6PM Ben's talk will be "The Diving Environment".

COMING SOON:

We realize that the bulk our clientele is made up of local divers, so we are working on a policy for those that need to fill tanks, buy gear, or drop off items for service- we'll have that in place shortly. Unfortunately, it's not looking like we're going to be able to manage rentals during the pandemic. Stay tuned for more on our Facebook page.

Feel free to contact us anytime by email dive@diversions-scuba.com, through our Facebook page www.facebook.com/diversions-scuba/. If you leave a voicemail message at the shop phone, it may be a few days before we return calls- but you may call Tami's cell phone (608)347-2822. Stay connected and stay healthy! ---Tami



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lead you from shore to the wreck, so navigation is easy. After the orientation dive we ate lunch and then did our first boat dive. Coco View has a nice set up. All your gear is stored in your personal cubby, there are hangers for wetsuits, pegs for bc's and regulators and 2 shelves. Each boat has its own gear room, so the dive masters know which gear belongs on each boat. The divemaster loaded the gear and set up the tanks. After the dive the divemaster would rinse your gear in one of the multiple rinse tanks and hang it up. During the week we dove with the same group of people. Originally there was supposed to be 13 people on the boat but because of the cancellations we only had 6 which was really nice. Coco View offers 2 boat dives daily but on the way back they will drop you off at the beginning of the channel and you can swim back to the resort so you could do 4 boat dives daily plus unlimited shore diving. On Monday we found out that Honduras closed its borders to all incoming and outgoing flights for 7 days, which meant our week-long vacation was going to turn into a longer one. We also got notified by United that our return flight was cancelled, and nothing was scheduled after that. The manager did a good job at keeping people informed and there were daily notices on our door and in the restaurant and bar. The following day the manager told us at breakfast that there were some flights that were opening up for the following week and we should check with our airline to see if we could get on one. We decided to skip the first boat dive and try to reschedule. United has a 2 hour wait time but we had a tablet and good Wi-Fi, so we logged on to United and was able to book a flight on Thursday March 26th through Houston then on to Milwaukee. Once that was taken care of, we went diving. During the trip we managed 28 dives. On March 21st after we finished our morning dive and got back on the boat we were informed that the Honduran government shut down all boat dives, but we were still able to shore dive.

The diving in Roatan is all wall diving. The boat rides were short, usually less than 10 minutes and most of our dives were over an hour. We would get a dive briefing before we left the dock. The top of the reef starts in 15-30 feet of water and they had mooring lines

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on all the sites. The corals and sea fans looked healthy. Like the rest of the Caribbean they do have a lionfish problem, but they are actively hunting them, so we didn't see too many and we didn't see them every day. There are a couple of spotted eagle rays that live in the channel, so we saw them almost every day, sometimes cruising by other times foraging in the sand. They also have a freakish amount of sharp



nose puffer fish and lobster. Other highlights include red lipped batfish, spade fish, pipe horse, pipe fish, sea horses, octopus, squid, banded jawfish (we haven't seen one of those before), garden eels, various shrimps and crabs, grouper, and even a passing group of dolphin on our safety stop. We had great weather, it was warm and sunny. The wind picked up later in the week, so it was a little more difficulty to get on the boat but the divemaster and captain did a good

job keeping everyone safe. We had the same divemaster for the week and dove with the same group of people.

As we were getting closer to our departure date we received another notification from United that they cancelled our Houston to Milwaukee flight but booked us on a Houston, Denver Milwaukee flight. We would get home the same day but later than planned, but we would at least be in the States. The next day United notified us that our Houston to Denver flight was cancelled but not the Denver to Milwaukee flight. I called United and found out that there were no Houston to Milwaukee flight on Thursday, but they had on one Friday, so we booked that. I then made a reservation at Marriott Houston Airport Hotel. On our departure day we were taken to the airport and we got there before it even opened. Once we got in there were no lines, so we got checked in quickly. United had to send an empty plane to Roatan for us but it was full on the way back. We got into Houston and cleared customs really fast except that Ellen got flagged for a random agriculture inspection which means they x-rayed our bags and asked a few questions. After getting through that we hopped on the tram to our hotel. The next day we went back to check in and there were no customers, just a lot of United employees. We got checked in and headed to our gate. Our flight back to Milwaukee was almost empty except for some United crew that was being moved to another airport.

Coco View was outstanding while we were there, they did a good job at keeping everyone notified of what was happening, they didn't charge us for the extra days at the resort or diving. There was a curfew that was put into place and the staff needed to be home by 6:00pm so they moved dinner to 4:15 PM. There were some tours that were offered but those were cancelled. They normally had entertainment each night but some of those were cancelled. On the nights they had it, the resort let the entertainment spend the night, so they didn't have to worry about the curfew. The manager and his girlfriend lived on the property so she would tend bar in the evening instead of the normal bartender. We were fortunate to get out on Thursday, many of the guests were there until Saturday. When we got back, we called our employee health and we were told there was no need to quarantine so we went back to work the next week. All in all, it was a good trip besides all the cancellations, but the resort went above and beyond of what was expected.

Our pictures are up on our website at www.jellen.us if you are interested.



Your Article Could Be Here!

We are always looking for contributions to the newsletter!
Please send your trip reports, articles, photos, etc. to
news@fourlakesscubaclub.org.

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