



Four Lakes Scuba Club Newsletter

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November 2017



This Month's Meeting

Wednesday, November 8th, 7:30 PM
Babe's - 5614 Schroeder Road

Speaker: Leah Potts

"Diving Deep into Opportunity: The OWUSS Rolex Scholarship"

In November we will be joined by Rolex Scholar Leah Potts. For as long as Leah can remember, water has been her close friend. Born 22 years ago in Blacksburg, Virginia, Leah's earliest memories are of splashing around on the banks of the New River and competing in her local swim league. In high school, she discovered the magic of scuba diving and pursued an open water certification in St. John, USVI, on a family vacation. Those first few certification dives were just the beginning of a passion that has only intensified over the past seven years.

Leah began college in her hometown at Virginia Tech and promptly became president of the scuba club. As president, she worked with her local dive shop to help create a thriving dive community in the Blue Ridge Mountains, far from the nearest ocean. During this time, she discovered her love for sharing diving with others and swiftly rose through the certification ranks to become a divemaster. An insatiable appetite for bottom time was born, and she soon realized that she wanted to be able to dive deeper and stay longer, which led to her pursuit of technical and cave diving at the age of 18.

Unable to get enough of the underwater world, Leah took a pause from school to work as a divemaster in the Florida Keys. The hard work of the high season was everything she dreamed it would be, and each day was a new adventure as she helped people experience their first breaths underwater or guided seasoned divers around beautiful marine sanctuaries. As much as she loved the salty Keys, her love for learning and the spring-fed caves of North Florida continued to call for her, and she returned to school at University of Florida (UF), where she is graduating this April with a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural and Biological Engineering.

At UF, Leah has balanced her studies with weekends spent exploring the miles of cave passage hidden beneath her very feet. She quickly fell in love with the close-knit cave diving community, which prompted her to start thinking of ways she could give back to it. In 2015, through a Divers Alert Network research internship, Leah spent six months researching cave diving fatalities and learning about diver physiology through intense field work.

Leah's interests lie in diver education, research, and exploration – as well as effective written and visual communication about these areas that make the underwater world a more accessible and safer place for all. She says: "Water has given me so much – life, peace of mind, passion – that there is nothing more that I want than to impact it in return in a positive way."



2017 Holiday Party— Register Now!

Please join us for our annual holiday party on December 13! We will have a family-style chicken and fish dinner.

Please note registration for the party is required. The cost is \$10 for club members and \$15 for non-members with club membership included until May. This will be a social event with no formal speaker. Please bring any dive photos and stories you would like to share! Hope to see everyone there!

Four Lakes Scuba Club Officers

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10 Tips from Project Aware for Divers to Protect the Ocean Planet

1. Be a Buoyancy Expert

Underwater plants and animals are more fragile than they appear. The swipe of a fin, bump of your camera or even a touch can destroy decades of coral growth, damage a plant or harm an animal. Streamline your scuba and photo gear, keep your dive skills sharp, perfect your underwater photo techniques and continue your dive training to fine-tune your skills. Always be aware of your body, dive gear and photo equipment to avoid contact with the natural environment.

2. Be a Role Model

New scuba divers are being trained and certified every day. Regardless of your experience level, be sure to set a good example for others when interacting with the environment – while underwater and on land.

3. Take Only Photos - Leave Only Bubbles

Nearly everything natural found underwater is alive or will be used by a living creature. If you take a coral, shell or animal, you can disturb the delicate balance and add to the depletion of dive sites for future generations.

4. Protect Underwater Life

Choose not to touch, feed, handle, chase or ride anything underwater. Your actions may stress the animal, interrupt feeding and mating behavior or provoke aggressive behavior. Understand and respect underwater life and follow all local laws and regulations.

5. Become a Debris Activist

An astonishing amount of waste makes its way underwater, reaching even the most remote ocean areas. Once there, it kills wildlife, destroys habitats and threatens our health and economy. Don't let your dives go to waste. Remove and report what doesn't belong underwater every time you dive. Make a conscious effort to buy green, buy local and, when possible, buy less.

6. Make Responsible Seafood Choices

Overfishing leads to species declines while harmful fishing practices damage and pollute underwater ecosystems. You play a critical role as a consumer. If seafood is part of your meal selection, ensure you're choosing sustainably sourced species and encourage others, including restaurants and shop owners, to do the same.

7. Take Action

Scuba divers are some of the strongest ocean advocates on the planet. Now, more than ever, divers like you are taking a stand. Speak out for conservation, share your underwater images, report environmental damage to authorities and campaign for change.

8. Be an Eco-tourist

Make informed decisions when choosing and visiting a destination. Choose facilities dedicated to responsible social and environmental business practices that include water conservation, energy reduction, proper waste disposal, use of mooring buoys and respect for local cultures, laws and regulations.

9. Shrink Your Carbon Footprint

Global warming and ocean acidification are putting your favorite animals and the whole ocean planet at risk. Do your part by understanding and reducing your carbon footprint and look for ways to offset what you can't reduce.

10. Give Back

Ocean protection depends on all of our actions, large and small. Investing in the ocean protects our planet and lets the dive adventure live on. Donate or fundraise for ocean protection to fuel the grassroots action and policy change necessary to ensure a clean, healthy ocean planet.

Thank you for giving the ocean planet the protections it deserves!

Join Wazee Sports Center for our 2018 Cozumel Trip

February 24 – March 3, 2018

Hotel Cozumel

Includes:

- Free daily breakfast
- Hotel taxes and service charges
- Days x 2 tank morning dive and 1 tank afternoon boat dive
- 2 days x2 tank morning boat dives
- Free one tank night dive
- Unlimited air on the 5 boat dives
- Welcome tank for shore dive on arrival day
- Tanks and Weights

7 Nights Pool View:

- \$1059 per diver, \$468 per vacationer (double occupancy)
- \$1499 per diver (single occupancy)
- \$1050 per diver, \$414 per vacationer (triple occupancy)

7 Nights Ocean View:

- \$1184 per diver, \$592 per vacationer (double occupancy)
- \$1751 per diver (single occupancy)
- \$1089 per diver, \$498 per vacationer (triple occupancy)

Call Today, 715-896-0726!

Need a Dive Flag?

Used dive flag found in excellent condition. Free to a good home! Please contact Rick at rk_diver@hotmail.com if you are interested.

Aqua Lung Regulator Safety Problem

Do you have one of those Aqua Lung regulators with that Auto Closure Device or ACD? That's the feature that allows you to rinse your first-stage without the blanking cap in place and without getting water in the works. Well, Aqua Lung is concerned that a component may not have been properly tightened resulting in a possible gas-flow failure during a dive. Aqua Lung is conducting a voluntary product check of regulators with the ACD yoke systems. Models affected are the Titan LX with serial numbers prefixed E or F, the Core ACD with serial numbers prefixed E – H, and the Legend ACD or Legend LX ACD. If you have one of these regulators, best get it checked out by a qualified Aqua Lung service technician. For additional assistance, please call 800-775-3483 or visit www.aqualung.com and click on the Safety Notice.

From Undercurrent.org

In the News

-[Kittiwake Flipped](#): Tropical storm Nate passed close to the Caymans and Cozumel, generating seas massive enough to flip Grand Cayman's wreck of the Kittiwake on her side. (Undercurrent.org)

-[Scuba Diving Magazine's 2018 Readers Choice Awards](#)

-[Tekkies Can Breathe \(He\) Again](#) (Divernet.com)

-[UN Conference Calls for Shark and Ray Protection](#) (Divernet.com)

-[Dive Industry Hurricane Recovery Update](#) (DEMA.org)