



E-SLATE

American Academy of Underwater Sciences (AAUS)

EDITORIAL NOTE –February 2015

Welcome to the February E-Slate. In this edition we continue our new article series, *Do You Know*, in response to our strategic planning surveys, update the strategic planning process, call for AAUS Instructor renewals, 2014 statistic submissions and open nominations for the 2015 BOD elections and Conrad Limbaugh award. We welcome news, announcements, job postings, program highlights and images of underwater work at aaus@disl.org. Current and past issues of the E-Slate are available at www.aaus.org.

Do You Know...

Thank you to all who participated in the recent strategic planning surveys. Initial review of these surveys indicated that many AAUS members were either unaware of, or misunderstood some member benefits or AAUS policies/procedures. In an attempt to increase awareness and provide clarification, we will be including a targeted informational article in each month's ESlate. If you would like to see specific issues or questions addressed, please send them to the AAUS office for consideration.

Statistics

In a recent survey, members were asked if one of the goals in the bylaws of AAUS, "collect, review and distribute statistics relating to scientific diving activities and scientific diving incidents", should be revised or updated. Although 85% of over 200 respondents said no, 13 people commented they would like to see additional analysis, access and distribution of the statistics turned in annually by each OM.

Collection and analysis of these statistics is an ongoing process; each year over 150 OMs turn in summaries of their dives for the previous year, including incidents, if any. After review by the Statistics Committee for accuracy, they become part of the annual report each year. Annual reports are available to members logged onto the website at https://secure.aaus.org/resource_library. Data from the reports are summarized on the website https://secure.aaus.org/pressure_related_incidence_rates.

Thankfully, the number of incidents reported each year is so low that the statistics committee only reviews and updates the table every five years or so. Analyses of these summary data have been published in two papers available in the Resource Library of the AAUS website.

Additionally, DSOs of OMs can access the data base live through the same site that they use to report their annual statistics (<http://stats.diveaaus.org>). After logging in with your OM's password, you may view the summary report, summary dives by purpose, and incidents by clicking on "AAUS Summary Reports." Please be aware the data base is continually being added to by DSOs and that current year's numbers will change, sometimes daily, as more statistics are added.

If you have any ideas to better analyze or distribute statistics or need help understanding limits of the statistics, don't hesitate to contact the AAUS office (aaus@disl.org) or the Statistics Committee.

NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. Lee H. Somers

(February 18, 1938 - January 1, 2015)

Dr. Lee H. Somers passed away quietly on New Year's Day 2015 in Flagstaff, AZ. Lee was born on February 18, 1938, in Champaign County, IL, and raised on a farm there. He



discovered his love of water and knack for teaching in Boy Scouts, becoming an Eagle Scout. After working as a commercial hard-hat diver in Florida, Lee earned a Master's degree in Geology from the University of Illinois and a Ph.D. in Oceanography from the University of Michigan. He was on the University of Michigan faculty for 30 years, teaching oceanography, scuba diving, and

diving technology, while serving as the university's Diving Safety Officer. He also established a hyperbaric chamber for treatment and research at the University of Michigan. Lee was deeply involved in improving diving safety for recreational divers, public safety search and rescue personnel, and commercial divers. To this end, working with the NOAA-National Sea Grant Program, he gave countless presentations and field demonstrations across the country, and wrote dozens of books, papers, and leaflets. In 1972 Lee wrote the Research Diver's Manual, used worldwide. He was a major contributor to the NOAA Diving Manual, the research text for all working divers and

diving scientists. Lee was a founding member of PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors), a founder and first president of the American Academy of Underwater Sciences, and a founding director and Director Emeritus of the Our World-Underwater Scholarship Society®, which provides experiential year-long Rolex scholarships worldwide to graduates studying ocean sciences and arts. Lee received many prestigious national awards, most recently the 2013 DEMA Reaching Out Award for Education. Lee helped shape the way the world dives, and he was an inspiration and mentor to many. Lee retired to Flagstaff, AZ, with his wife, Martha, who survives him.

Memorial donations can be made to the Our World Underwater Scholarship Society
<http://www.owuscholarship.org/>

AAUS BOD Call for Nominations

The 2015 AAUS Nominating Committee is now accepting for consideration nominations of individual members to stand for election for President-elect, Secretary, and one Director-at-Large position on the AAUS Board of Directors. Commencing on January 01, 2016 the elected Director-at-Large candidate will serve one three-year term, President-elect and Secretary serve two-year terms. An electronic poll will open on May 01 and close June 30, 2015. Instructions and information at www.aaus.org/announcements#2015nominations

AAUS Instructor Renewal 2015

Attention AAUS Instructors! It is time for your annual AAUS-ITI Instructor Renewal. You should have already received a renewal package (paper and/or electronic) from ITI. You must renew as an Instructor with International Training (ITI) to maintain status as an AAUS Instructor and to be able to register and certify AAUS divers.

Paper renewal- if you received a paper renewal package, you can complete the necessary information and submit the annual instructor renewal fee (\$160) via snail mail.

Online renewal- if you did not receive a paper renewal package, or if you prefer to renew online, you may complete this process on the ITI-SDI/TDI website (www.tdisdi.com). To do so, login to your Instructor Profile, and then choose 'Tools', 'Renew Membership' from the menu bar. Complete the necessary information and submit the annual instructor renewal fee (\$160) online with a credit card.

Facility Renewal-

As an AAUS instructor you must submit a [Facility Renewal Form](#) if you are the primary instructor/facility administrator at your AAUS facility but a fee* will not be charged this year.

If you are an AAUS instructor and the primary instructor/facility administrator at an SDI/TDI Training facility, you must submit a [Facility Renewal Form](#) for that SDI/TDI training facility but a fee* will not be charged this year.

**A facility renewal fee is only required if you are an AAUS instructor and the primary SDI/TDI instructor/facility administrator at an industry/retail facility.*

Specific questions regarding the annual renewal process or online interface should be directed to ITI. General questions about the AAUS Certification Program should be directed to the AAUS Certification program coordinator (Chris Rigaud, crigaud@maine.edu) or the AAUS office (Heather Fletcher, aaus@disl.org).

AAUS Member Statistics Submission

It is time for submission of organizational member (OM) 2014 scientific diving statistics to the AAUS database. Please begin compiling these numbers now! Even if your OM is using the web based dive log system, you must still print out a summary report, review it for accuracy, and submit it to the website below. OMs admitted in 2014 are not required to submit stats for 2014 but if you have them for the full year and would like to submit contact Jim Hayward (ucbdiver@berkeley.edu) or Mike Dardeau (mdardeau@disl.org). Statistics are due Jan 1 and are late after Apr 1. The Statistics Committee will try to contact you about problems with your submission after April, but if there is no satisfactory response by July 1st, the OM will be turned over to the Standards Committee for action. Please visit stats.diveaaus.com to submit your stats.

2015 Conrad Limbaugh Award Nominations

Nominations are now open for the 2015 Conrad Limbaugh Memorial Award for Scientific Diving Leadership. This award is presented annually to an individual who has made a significant contribution to diving safety and diving leadership on behalf of the scientific diving community. It is open to any past or present member of AAUS. Nominations are sought from the AAUS general membership, and selected candidates are voted for by the AAUS general membership. Current BOD members are not eligible during their term of office.

Please complete the online submission form at www.aaus.org/conrad_limbaugh or submit the names and contact information for nominees, along with a one-paragraph justification, to John Heine, AAUS Awards Committee, by email to: jheine@ucsd.edu. Nominations close March 31, 2015. A list of previous awardees can be viewed on the submission web page.

Strategic Planning

The AAUS Board of Directors is moving ahead with the development of our five-year strategic plan. The results from the two surveys of the entire membership can now be viewed here ([Strategic Planning #1](#)) and here ([Strategic Plan Survey #2](#)). Thank you to all who filled out surveys, and thanks also to the DSOs who distributed the Diver Survey to their scientific divers. All surveys are now closed. The Strategic Planning committee will meet with our facilitator, Thom Skalko, to create the first draft of the plan February 13-16, 2015. Thom has shepherded many nonprofit organizations through the strategic planning process and he facilitated the last AAUS strategic planning effort. He has provided key support, advice, and guidance to the Board over the last year and we greatly appreciate his time, efforts, and knowledge!

New DSO Orientation

This program is designed to provide an orientation for new Diving Safety Officers and for existing DSOs who would like more information and an update on particulars of running an AAUS Diving Safety Program at their respective institutions or organizations. Also open to non AAUS organizations who would like more information about AAUS. This one day workshop will be held at in Boston on April 27, 2015. The cost is \$100. Registration is now open at www.aaus.org/2015_spring_new_dso_orientation.

Northwest DSO Meeting

A meeting of the Pacific Northwest Diving Safety Officers convened on Friday, January 16th hosted by the President of CAUS, Jeremy Heywood, at the Vancouver Aquarium in B.C., Canada. This group has been gathering on a biennial basis since 2009. The thirty participants included both Americans and Canadians, representing a total of 23 institutions, 9 of



which are active AAUS OMs. In addition to the DSOs, the attendees also included the Director of Training from the Divers' Institute of Technology and a representative from the Washington Department of Labor & Industries. It was a very productive session, including presentations on diving operations in remote areas, collaborations with aquarium programs, the UHMS recommendations for submerged unresponsive divers, and a review of scientific diver training styles. The afternoon was spent on a series of workshop-style discussions of current relevant topics, such as the recent OSHA/Landry's ruling and a comparison of methods for administering dive rescue drills. Participants also enjoyed networking and learning more new ideas during a behind-the-scenes tour of the Aquarium and a group dinner in downtown Vancouver.

For more information about the Pacific Northwest DSOs please contact Pema Kitaeff pema@uw.edu, Gavin Wuttken Gavin.Wuttken@pdza.org, or Jeremy Heywood Jeremy.Heywood@vanaqua.org

Self-Evaluation Form

With help from the Membership, Standards and Accreditation committees, the AAUS BOD has developed a version of the "Self-accreditation checklist" which is being called the Self-Evaluation Form. This is a useful tool for any dive program and we encourage you to complete it. You will find a link on your organization's profile where you can upload the completed form as a "Misc Document File." Adding the self-evaluation form to your OM profile will help the Membership committee and other OMs to confirm that you are an active OM in good standing with AAUS. In 2015, the self-evaluation will likely become a required component of every OM profile. You may view the form [here](#) or in the resource library www.aaus.org.

STUDENT OPPORTUNITES

Coral Reef Ecology Field Course

The 2015 Korallion Lab (www.korallionlab.com) coral reef ecology field course will be held August 13-22 and August 22-31, 2015. This course is designed to provide students of any level with a sound foundation in ecological concepts,



survey techniques and experimental design in field research applied to coral reef ecosystems. Please email Dr. Michael Sweet at m.sweet@derby.ac.uk for any scientific issue regarding the course. For

any other information on the course and availability please email info@korallionlab.com.

REEF 2015 Internship

REEF's Marine Conservation Internship provides an in-depth look into REEF's Volunteer Fish Survey Project and Invasive Lionfish Program. Geared towards college-age individuals and recent graduates, the internship provides diverse experiences including scientific diving, outreach and education, data collection and management, non-profit operations, and public speaking. During the three month internship, you will have many opportunities to dive and volunteer with partner organizations in the Florida Keys and South Florida. Visit <http://www.REEF.org/internship> to apply. Application deadline is March 2, 2015.

UPCOMING EVENTS

1st European Conference on Scientific Diving

The 1st European conference on scientific diving organized by WiTUS, GAUSS, in collaboration with the VDST and the CMAS Scientific Committee will be held March 01-03, 2015 in Stuttgart, Germany. Symposium organizers welcome oral presentations and posters on all fields of scientific diving research and training with special emphasis on methods, techniques, and research in extreme habitats. For more information email witus@f04.uni-stuttgart.de

5th Annual Danbury Dive Medicine Conference

The fifth annual Danbury Medicine Conference at Danbury Hospital, Connecticut will be April 11, 2015. The diving community meets with the medical community and first responders to discuss the many aspects of Diving Medicine and Diving Safety. For more information contact Raquel.Rodriguez@wcthn.org

NBDHMT DMT Courses at Aquarius Reef Base

Aquarius Reef Base's DMT training program, to be held March 30-April 4, 2015, provides a focused didactic and practical training that addresses recognition, stabilization and treatment of decompression and other diving-related injuries. These topics represent core curriculum, as does the necessary invasive skills that permit optimal medical management. Additional course content includes decompression procedures, chamber operations, and marine life injuries. All training will take place at the Reef Base shore facility in Islamorada, Florida. More information at <http://www.aaus.org/announcements#NBDHMT DMT>

Rebreather and Scientific Diving Training Workshop

The National Park Service (NPS), NOAA, AAUS and DAN are sponsoring a Rebreather and Scientific Diving Training Workshop at the Wrigley Marine Science Center, Catalina Island, CA the week of February 16th, 2015. The event will review standards, operating procedures, physiology, accidents, and future equipment evolution relevant to scientific diving with rebreathers. There are a few more spaces available. Find more information on topics to be cover, speakers and registration at [2015 rebreather and scientific diving training workshop](#)

2015 CAUS Symposium

The Canadian Association for Underwater Science (CAUS) 2015 Annual General Meeting and Symposium is scheduled for February 25- 26, 2015 in Toronto, Ontario and hosted by Ripley's Aquarium of Canada. CAUS members are strongly encouraged to attend, and all others interested in learning more about CAUS are welcome too. Please contact info@caus.ca for details.

JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS

Full information and application instructions for the following jobs can be found at www.aaus.org/job_board

Reef Check Foundation

Southern California Volunteer Coordinator

The mission of the American Academy of Underwater Sciences is to facilitate the development of safe and productive scientific divers through education, research, advocacy, and the advancement of standards for scientific diving practices, certifications, & operations.

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