The Presidents’ Corner
by Matt Rownin

And just like that…..Fall is upon us. As the hurricane season passes the half-way mark, the US is bracing for a big one….Hurricane Matthew is hitting the southeastern coast as I write this. Hopefully everyone listens to the warnings and gets out if told to do so but you know there will always be those that stay behind. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

There is still time to get in the water locally so don’t delay. I was in last week and the water was still in the low 70’s and visibility is improving. Get out there and dive locally, it is a great way to hone your skills too if you have not been in the water for a while before you take that tropical vacation.

As the dive season winds down the Holiday season starts to heat up which is a great time to visit our local dive shops and get some early shopping done and why not upgrade some of your own gear too. If you’re not heading to the tropics now is also a great time to get gear serviced.

The next meeting is October 28 and our speaker is going to be Dr. Mike Cassetta. He will be bringing the NUSAR (Newtown Under Water Search and Rescue) truck and giving a presentation on the great work NUSAR does.

Safe diving…..see you on the 28th.
FCDA Donor

The business listed on this page has donated dive gear and dive services to help support the Fairfield County Diving Association.

http://nedive.com

NEW ENGLAND DIVE CENTER

UPCOMING TRIPS

Bonaire 2016
Sat, Nov 12, 2016 - Sat, Nov 19, 2016
Divi Flamingo

Truk Lagoon 2016
Sun, Nov 27, 2016 - Sun, Dec 04, 2016
Truk Odyssey

Red Sea (Egypt) 2017
Sat, Nov 25, 2017 - Sat, Dec 02, 2017
Red Sea Aggressor

New FCDA Members

No new members to report this month! Please invite your dive friends and family to our meetings! The more, the merrier!
September Meeting DAN Raffle Winners

After our FCDA Members Present night the club held its monthly raffle to support our DAN Sponsorship.


Thanks to New England Dive Center Orbit Marine Dive Center, Squalus Marine Divers and Jeff Susa for donating tonight’s raffle prizes for our DAN raffle.

Remember, you can't win if you don't buy tickets and you can't buy tickets if you don’t get up and come out to FCDA events and meetings!

FCDA Member Ads

Hey - have you got a non retail-diving business that you’d like to share with fellow members of FCDA? Get your business card size ad in the FCDA monthly newsletter "Surface Interval" for only $50.00 for one year. Give your business a boost and help support the production of our monthly newsletters. For more information, write to FCDA, P.O. Box 3005, Fairfield, CT 06824 or email to fcda@aol.com.

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A professional diver has been killed by a stingray at an oceanarium in Singapore.

Philip Chan, 62, was heading a team of divers who were removing sea creatures from the Underwater World attraction on Tuesday.

The once-popular marine life park shut down earlier this year.

Police said Mr. Chan was taken to hospital where he died from his injuries. They are now investigating the "unnatural death".

A police spokesman said the incident was the first of its kind in Singapore.

An official statement from the Haw Par Corporation, which owns the park, described it as a "tragic accident".

"Mr. Chan was one of 10 staff who stayed on to care for the animals while suitable homes were being found," a spokesperson said, adding that the animal transfer program has been suspended.

"He was a veteran diver, aquarist and animal caregiver who had been caring for the aquatic animals since Underwater World's opening."

**Rare attack**

Underwater World opened in May 1991 but closed last June after struggling to compete with similar aquarium attractions.

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Stingray Kills Singapore Oceanarium Diver

BBC News

(Continued from page 4)

It had faced criticism in the past for keeping rare pink dolphins, some of which had been taken from the wild.

Its animals are being moved to an aquarium China.

Stingrays are commonly found in tropical waters.

Their razor-sharp barbs, located at the end of their tails, are coated in toxic venom which they often use as a means to defend themselves when threatened.

While the animals' stings are painful, they rarely attack humans.

Wildlife conservation expert Steve Irwin was famously killed by a stingray in 2006 during a diving expedition off the Great Barrier Reef. He was struck in the chest by the stingray's barb.

NZ Divers Help Clear WWII Bombs in Solomons

http://www.radionz.co.nz/

A joint military exercise in Solomon Islands has so far recovered more than 50 items of unexploded munitions.

It involves personnel from New Zealand, Australia, Britain and Canada.

Operation Render Safe is a three-week-long exercise to remove explosive remnants from World War II that can be found scattered over land and sea in the Solomons.

HMNZS Manawanui, Lieutenant Commander Muzz Kennett, said the New Zealand team had been working in the Russell Island group, to the northwest of Guadalcanal, aiming to ensure communities and the waters they relied on were safe.

"We have found 250 pound bombs and smaller ordnance - one village we found up to 52 pieces of ordnance that we removed and detonated some explosives to get rid of them.

T h e  c o m m a n d e r  o f

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Capt. Noel Voroba/Group Leader

(Continued on page 6)
NZ Divers Help Clear WWII Bombs In Solomons (Continued)

(Continued from page 5)

"It's working really well, we have been busy, and in the last five days we have got rid of approximately 400 pounds of ordnance."

Operation Render Safe, which this year runs from 15 September to 7 October, takes place every two years and is led by the Australian Defence Force (ADF).

About 120 ADF personnel are working with 40 specialists from New Zealand, Canada and the United Kingdom, with the cooperation of the Solomon Islands Government and in partnership with the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force.

A similar operation in 2014 cleared 109 sites on the Papua New Guinea island of Bougainville of 2293 ammunition items, containing more than 16 tons of explosives.

Diving teams are preparing to move about 450,000 mussels to permit the construction of a new $1 billion Interstate Highway 74 bridge over the Mississippi River on the Iowa-Illinois border, state and federal officials say.

Workers began setting up the mussel relocation project on Tuesday near Interstate Highway 74 between Bettendorf, Iowa, and Moline, Ill., according to the Iowa Department of Transportation. The relocation initiative, which will start next week, is being handled by Ecological Specialists Inc. of O'Fallon, Mo., a consulting firm that specializes in Mississippi River mussels. The move should be completed in October, officials said.

The Iowa and Illinois state transportation agencies will share the $2.4 million cost to avoid and minimize impacts to threatened and endangered mussel species, officials said.

"These mussels, like all endangered species, are in the public trust. They belong to everybody," said Kristen Lundh, a biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "There are three endangered species in this mix, and we want to preserve as many of them as we can because they are an important resource here on the Mississippi River."

The mussels are being moved as a requirement of the Federal Endangered Species Act, which prohibits the harm, harassment, or taking of a federally listed species. Three federally endangered mussels within the relocation area include: Spectaclecase (Cumberlandia monodata), Sheepnose (Plethobasus cyphyus), and Higgin's Eye Pearl mussel (Lampsilis higginsii).

Freshwater mussels play an important role in the aquatic ecosystem, according to the Fish and Wildlife Service. The presence of diverse and reproducing populations of mussels indicate a healthy aquatic system which means good fishing, good water quality for waterfowl and other wildlife species, as well as assurance that water is safe. Mussels filter bacteria, algae, and other small particles, which make them

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Divers To Move 450,000 Mussels for Iowa-Illinois Bridge Project (Continued)

one of the few animals that improve water quality, according to experts. Mussels are also a food source for many wildlife species such as muskrat, otters, and egrets. Because mussels firmly burrow into the lake or stream bed, they may actually stabilize the lake or stream bottom, thus minimizing the scouring affects of floods and wave action.

Moving the mussels is necessary to accommodate the new alignment of the I-74 bridge over the Mississippi River, which carries about 75,000 cars and trucks daily and is the busiest bridge linking Iowa and Illinois, said Sam Shea, an Iowa DOT transportation planner.

The new bridge, which will be slightly upstream from the existing bridge, will accommodate six lanes of traffic, plus an auxiliary lane in each direction and with full-width paved shoulders. It is scheduled to open to traffic in 2021 and final work is due to be completed in 2022.

The $1 billion bridge project is being paid for with state money from Illinois and Iowa, plus federal dollars, although the Iowa share of the mussel relocation work is being paid for with state dollars, said Mary Kay Solberg, an Iowa DOT environmental specialist in Ames.

The Fish and Wildlife Service is aware that endangered mussels are located in the bridge construction project area because of surveys conducted the past two years, Lundh said. Those surveys showed there are approximately 850,000 freshwater mussels comprised of 25 different species present within the construction area, including the three federally listed species, along with two state-listed species, Black Sandshell (Ligumia recta) and Butterfly (Plagiola lineolata).

Plans developed by state and federal officials call for removing additional mussels at a later date after the old I-74 bridge is removed.

Fish and Wildlife officials said diving will occur on both sides of the Mississippi River, just upstream of the existing bridge. A barge will be moored and act as a diving platform. to allow the mussels to be collected by hand. Diving teams will use a grid system on the riverbed to determine where to collect individual mussels, which will be brought to the surface. Mussels will be relocated within 24 hours to areas of equal or better habitat outside and primarily upstream of the construction area, federal officials said.

"We will not be removing mussels from all areas, just the impact zone that has the highest density of mussels," Lundh said.

The plan calls for biologists aboard the barge to count mussels within each grid to insure most mussels are collected. The mussels will be transported by boat from the barge to a crew on the river bank with a federally permitted malacologist, who is an expert regarding mussels. The mussels will be identified and engraved with a rotary Dremel tool. Federally endangered species will also be cleaned of invasive Zebra mussels, measured, checked for age, and photographed for scientific recording purposes. The mussels exposure to air will be limited to five minutes or less during processing.

During the relocation, navigation will not be affected. However, recreational boaters are asked to avoid the area if possible for the safety of divers. If you must be on the river at this location, "no wake" areas will be marked by buoys and operators of all watercraft are asked to reduce speed in the work area, state officials said.
Back by Popular Demand!
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Newtown Underwater Search & Rescue (NUSAR) is volunteer dive rescue team located in Sandy Hook, CT. NUSAR has provided year round service for water based emergencies to Newtown and the surrounding communities for since 1989. Our own Mike Cassetta, who serves as an Operations Officer for NUSAR, will share a slide presentation highlighting NUSAR's capabilities, review previous calls and demonstrate some of the team's dive equipment.