



## Greetings,

Recently I have had reason to consider my own diving future and my future with my department's dive team. I have finally reached the age and years of service to qualify for full retirement and that is on my mind a lot.

One of my passions for the last twenty years of my career has been our dive team. Over the years I have served in most every position we have and took the responsibility of training our team members. I am the oldest and longest serving diver on our team. For me that just means I know more of the history and evolutionary processes that have occurred relative to where we are now. It means I know what has worked for us in the past and what most of the waters we dive in are like.

We used to use different types of search patterns that have been forgotten because we exchanged them for sweep patterns that were easier, those less effective than some of the more complicated patterns we used to use. Some of our "tricks of the trade" are no longer known and our team "toolbox" has diminished in size. Our department

has had our dive team on such a limited budget; our divers have grown accustomed to inferior gear, piecemeal rigs and limited training time. Time and equipment that used to be required has become a rare reward. The saddest part is it has become an acceptable practice. We fight for everything we get and make the most of what we receive. The sad thing about this is I am describing most of the teams I come into contact with.

We can blame this on our lack of standards or politics or even the weather but in reality we let this happen to ourselves. We get tired of the game and accept what we get a lot of the time. We can change. We can still make a difference but WE have to step up and accept the responsibility ourselves.

We have new divers who come to us with minimal recreational scuba skills and expect them to understand that they barely know enough to keep themselves alive while they look at pretty fish. We sometimes have equipment that we have maintained in serviceable condition that is barely hanging on and needs work. Our training programs sometimes consist of arriving at a lake and asking each



other “What do you want to do today”. We set minimal goals for our team just so we can have a possibility of getting close. Why?

We have been working to be recognized as a level of professional diver for years. That is what most of the REAL reason we see so much emphasis put on PSD Standards. If we are recognized as professional divers, our department will have to give us what we need, we will have written guidelines and requirements to meet that we can train to. We will have someone else take responsibility for us through oversight or regulation. *“Standards will make things easier.”* That is the basis and underlying reasons of MOST of the arguments for PSD Standards. We will probably not see them for years. But I am certain we will eventually have PSD Standards.

We have to take responsibility for our teams and we need to do it now. We need to reevaluate what we do, why we do it and who we do it for.

**First** – Assess your team and SET NEW GOALS. What do you want your team to be capable of doing 3 months from now, in 6 months and this time next year? What training and what skills PROFICIENCY levels do you want your team to meet?

**Second** – If you are in need of equipment you obviously have not found a way to get it so far OR are waiting for someone to fix your problem for you. FIND YOUR OWN FUNDING. If you are reading this you know how to use the Internet. Use your skills – combine your team members into groups and search for grants. Find a sponsor. Conduct a fund raiser. Write a request to your administration outline not only what you need but WHY you need it and reaffirm the safety necessities of your need.

**Third** – If you do not have money or time to attend formal training courses, consider using a formal training course AS a fundraiser. Find a PSD Instructor who would be willing to teach for a set fee + expenses and presale spots in the class to other nearby teams and use the funds to offset your own cost of training. If this is still beyond reach, as a team, get together and discuss where your skills are, where you want them to be and set TOPIC SPECIFIC training days. Have one or two team members do the research and facilitate the classes by sharing what they learn. PRACTICE new skills on each training day.

**Forth** – Let the old guys MENTOR the younger divers. Your older divers sometimes hold a wealth of knowledge and are tremendous resources for your team. If they are not already involved, work out an arrangement that is acceptable to all involved that will pair up an experienced diver with a newer diver.

Obviously there is much more to this .If you would like to discuss this in a moderated group format, [CLICK HERE](#) and join us at the PSDiver Public Safety Diver Forum or copy and paste this URL in your browser window.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/PSDivers-PublicSafetyDiversForum/>

Your opinions, comments and even criticism are always welcome.

**Dive Safe,**  
**Mark Phillips \* Editor / Publisher - \* PSDiver Monthly**  
[www.psdiver.com](http://www.psdiver.com)

# SPECIAL to PSDiver Monthly

## Boat Accident Investigation

Ron Becker

Boat collisions differ markedly from auto collisions. The automobile accident reconstructionist generally deals with automobiles that remain on the ground and leave visible traces of their passage. Occasionally a vehicle will vault and become airborne but ultimately the path of the vehicle can be traced by the marks left prior to vaulting and those left when the vehicle returns. The automobile accident investigator deals with two dimensions. Not so for the underwater investigator that is trying to reconstruct a boat collision. If two boats collide, one generally rides up onto the other. There are no skid marks to reveal the path of the boats or their impact points. No skid marks in the traditional sense, but boats do have evidence of having come into contact with one another and marks borne by the boats can reveal much about the directions of travel, impact point and right of way. Keeping in mind that boat investigations involve three dimensions, some of the information that will be available to the investigator may be submerged. In fact point of impact can be confirmed by debris left as a result of the impact. Just as in auto collisions, there is a beginning and end to the debris left at the accident site. Finding the beginning of the debris puts the investigator very close to the point of impact. So to, underwater debris that can be associated with one or more of the

vessels involved in a collision can assist in determining point of impact. Of what value is point of impact? In auto collisions the point of impact and the resting point of the vehicles can assist in approximating speed at time of impact; to a lesser degree, point of impact can assist in determining right of way and speed in boat collisions. In those witnessed collisions where the impacting boat is launched overtop the impacted boat the distance traveled can assist in determining the speed of the impacting vessel. Most boating accidents do not occur in a vacuum. Someone survives;



Figure 9-1



Figure 9-2



Figure 9-3 Photo of the bottom of the vaulting boat  
Source: Dr. William Chilcott

someone witnessed the collision or the boats prior to collision. With the extensive use of recreational waterways today there is almost always someone watching if not videotaping or photographing in the area. Those who may be witnesses need to be identified as soon as possible and interviewed. Photographs and video footage should be examined for other observers or witnesses, and boats or automobiles in the background (Hickman, 2002).



**Figure 9-4 Photo of vaulted boat damage**  
Source: Dr. William Chilcott

impacted boat, damage should be to the hull of the impacted boat and to the bow of the impacting boat. The speed of the impacting boat and its weight will contribute to the depth of penetration in these kinds of collisions. There are no standard "depth penetration" tables that can be used based on make and model of boats as there are for automobiles but the depth of penetration can partially explain what happened before, during and

after the collision.

When boats collide one of two patterns generally results. If the impacting boat is planning (on step) its bow will be elevated. If the collision occurs with the impacting boat bow elevated it is likely to pass over or onto the impacted boat. In those situations there will be evidence of that passing on the bottom of the impacting boat. Any scratches on the bottom of the impacting boat that are attributable to the collision will impart a direction to the impact. In addition to the damage caused by the boat there may also be evidence of damage or injury resulting from the propeller or bow cleat (tie down). If the impacting boat does not pass over or onto the

Occasionally the dynamics of a crash can be best understood by reenacting the crash and documenting the collision and its aftermath.

The collision may result in the destruction of a boat's tachometer and/or speedometer. When this happens it is reasonable to conclude that the speed or horsepower reflected in the damaged instrument reflects the speed of the boat at the time of impact. Upon impact the indicator needle of the instrument may slap the back of the gauge and lodge there.

Occupants will secondarily



**Figure 9-5 Photo of ultraviolet speedometer**  
Source: William Chilcott

impact with the interior of their boats or be thrown from them. The occupant of a boat involved in a collision will be thrown in the direction opposite the collision impact. Often secondary impacts leave evidence of the change in speed during the collision. Steering wheels that are misshapen or broken, windshields that are cracked are evidence of passenger impact and can be used to ascertain speed. The type of steering wheel or windshield can be subjected to laboratory testing applying force sufficient to duplicate the damage on the original item and giving some indication of the velocity necessary to create the deforming force.

### Propeller injuries

Often in boating accidents an occupant may be thrown from the boat. If the occupant is the only person on board the vessel may begin a slow circle at high speed heading back to the point at which the occupant was lost. Most boats today are equipped with safety mechanisms that turn the engine off should the driver be thrown from the boat but many boaters fail to use this mechanism making them subject to the high speed turning boat.



**Figure 9-6 Photos of propeller injuries**  
**Source: Dr. William Chilco**

It is not uncommon for boats to run over swimmers, snorkelers, divers, water skiers or other boats. In instances when injury or death arises from the incident some conclusions may be drawn from the propeller cuts on the body. Different types of boat engines impart unique characteristics to propeller cuts. Deformities in the propeller may also be evident in the injuries produced by the propeller. In investigations involving propeller injuries or death it is important to obtain the motors and propellers from the boat. An examination of the propeller may immediately rule out a particular boat or tests may have to be done to determine whether the propeller in question caused the injuries or death being investigated.

The character of the wound may suggest a number of things:

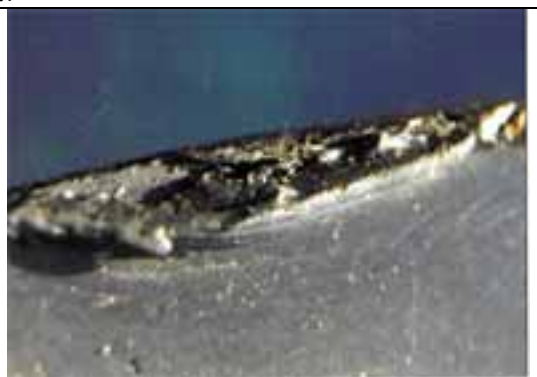
- Straight cuts occur when a propeller is performing at maximum efficiency (moving rapidly in or through the water). The cuts are fairly equidistant in spacing with substantial distance between cuts.
- Curved cuts occur when a propeller is performing less than its maximum efficiency (moving slowly in or through the water). The slow movement of the propeller cuts and pushes tissue backward.
- Cuts close together generally indicate a propeller in reverse gear in that the backward motion of the vessel is substantially reduced by gear ratios thereby depositing numerous cuts very close to each other.

Much of what needs to be known about propeller cuts can be discovered as a product of experimentation with limb prosthetic devices or anatomically correct dummies.

Propellers themselves can provide information about a crash, property damage, human injury and death. A thorough examination of the propeller will reveal that it has come into contact with something. The bends and dents may be a product of general use but serious distortion prevents the propeller from operating without shaking the boat apart.

Serious distortion is a product of contact with something hard enough to damage the propeller. In injury and death it may be necessary to remove the propeller from the motor and package it so as to preserve it for laboratory examination. A

gross examination of a propeller will reveal it has been impacted but a microscopic examination may reveal the source of the impact. Blood, tissue, hair and fiber may cling to the propeller. Suspect boats should have propellers packaged in such a fashion as to avoid the loss or damage of trace evidence.



**Propeller Damage Magnified**  
**Source: Dr. William Chilco**

## **Umbilical Maintenance For Public Safety Diving**

**by Chris Gabel**

Many public safety diving units are turning to surface supply diving to achieve their mission. There is a plethora of choices when it comes to umbilical design. The goal of this article is to cover some of the design aspects of the present day commercial umbilical and go over some basic maintenance.

First, I think it would be prudent to go back to basics. According to the U.S. Navy's umbilical manual (which is available for download at <http://www.supsalv.org>), the umbilicals consist of at least a 3/8 inch ID breathing gas hose, a 1/4 inch ID pneumofathometer hose, a communications cable, and a strengthening member. It also mentions that the communications cable and strengthening member may be a single integrated unit. Some of you may have heard about the new 1/4 inch hose that's being talked about and tested for diving by the US Navy. As of this writing, I have not heard that the 1/4 inch type being approved for civilian use. For this article, I am going to refer to the current 3/8 inch standard.

There are several different ways that the umbilicals can be physically put together. Pictures of some of these configurations have been included in this article. The first is the straight or non-twisted umbilical. This is a common set up where the pneumo line, communication line, breathing air line, and strengthening member are laid out and taped together. The strengthening member is

assembled so that strain is on the strengthening member line and not on the rest of the assembly. Taping occurs every eighteen to twenty four inches. The US Navy suggests using Polyken or duct tape. You can also use color codes if you wish.

That way top side can more readily tell the length of the umbilical over the side.



Another set up is the twisted umbilical. This is where all of your umbilical members are twisted to create one unit. This is more common on commercially manufactured umbilicals. There are also variations on a theme. You can have a twisted umbilical with an anti-foul/abrasion resistant guard. One design looks a lot like the old Chinese finger torture toy. It consists of a cross weave pattern of material. This material can run the entire length of umbilical or be limited to 50 or so feet from the diver to top side. This is a good design to keep getting fouled from strainers (downed trees and such) and other underwater debris.

Another design has all of the umbilical members encased. In this instance, the entire umbilical is encased in a flexible material that will get cut, scraped, or chemically attacked first before sacrificing the internal



members. It's a bit more expensive, but if you're planning on diving contaminated water, then this is more of the configuration for you.

The fittings can be made of one of two materials. Here on the East Coast brass fittings are the most common. The other option is stainless steel. The price of raw materials has made stainless steel one of the big buzzwords in the industry. The price of stainless and brass has become close to identical making stainless steel a viable alternative. You also have the option of using "re-usable" fittings. Although the theory of re-usable fittings is sound, I've heard mixed reviews in practice. You need to use your own best judgment when deciding on single use versus multi-use fittings.



Always visually check the fittings before and after each dive and have them pull tested at least annually. To pull test, the Navy outline for their equipment "Using appropriate rigging components, attach the hose to a lifting device and to a 200-pound dead weight."

Like your tires or anything else made of rubber or rubber-like material, there is a finite life expectancy. The US Navy states a maximum umbilical life of 12 years. That number is a guideline and not gospel. There are a lot of variables that can determine the life of the umbilical. For

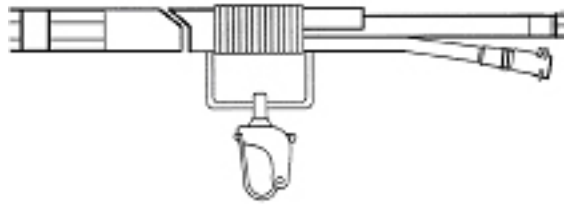
instance exposure to chemicals can be a factor in the life of the materials that make up the umbilical. A pre-dive visual inspection is always your friend. Inspect the umbilical for damage, bulges, swelling, cuts, and abrasions. If you think something doesn't look right, then the equipment should be sidelined until further inspection can be completed. You should have your umbilicals pressure checked at least annually. Depending on the amount of use and abuse, some public safety units should have their umbilicals inspected quarterly. Again, this is a matter of personal judgment and SOP/G.

Any electrical lines (communications cable, welding line, light and camera cables, etc.) need to be waterproof. That translates to true underwater cable with appropriately installed waterproof ends. (I have to say it like that because of some of the rigs that I've seen out there.) A Wal-Mart lamp cord with liquid tape doesn't count. Duct tape and tractor lights are not your friend.

Make sure that all power lines are in good working condition and free from deep cuts, abrasions, and defects and that the diver end is waterproof and secured properly.

## Cleaning

I'm not sure how many of you out



there clean your umbilicals at least once a year. I've seen that some organizations consider cleaning the umbilical blowing the hose down. That is not a thorough cleaning. It may get most of the insects and particulate matter out but does not clean out oils and general nastiness.

Basically, you can make a great cleaning system out of a couple of new or VERY clean garbage cans and a pump. Something in a submersible pump from Home Depot or Lowes is just fine. You're going to be running some water through it, not putting out a fire so it doesn't need to be more powerful than a decent steady flow. My suggestion would be to take one can and put in fresh water mixed with a mild detergent such as Simple Green. Put the umbilical in the can attaching one end to the pump and allow the other end to either be set inside the can or drain. Run the Simple Green and water solution through

the air line for a while. When you think it's clean, rinse it off with clean water. Then use the same process in the second can that has been filled with clean potable water. This step washes the detergent and water mixture out of the lines. Set the diver end of the umbilical to drain outside the can for the final rinse. Then voila, you have a much cleaner air line. The same process can be used on your pneumofathometer.



## Annual Inspection

Your umbilical needs to be inspected annually. What does that mean exactly? Well, that means that the umbilical should be pressure tested to 1.5 times the working pressure. It means that the fittings should be pull tested, preferably using a 200-pound dead weight as described in the Navy manual. The umbilical should be cleaned thoroughly and visually inspected. The annual inspection should be conducted and completed by trained professionals. That may be someone on your staff or a technician at a reputable commercial diving service center. After all, it's your life depending on the rubber tube to the surface.



My thanks to Erich Vargas of Umbilicals International for some of the pictures used in this article.

**Remember, dive safe.**

Email Chris at [cgabel@ocean-eye.net](mailto:cgabel@ocean-eye.net).

## PSDiver News

### Emergency officials suspend search for man who leaped into Lower Neches Valley Authority canal

[http://www.southeasttexaslive.com/site/news.cfm?newsid=19436743&BRD=2287&PAG=461&dept\\_id=512588&rft=6](http://www.southeasttexaslive.com/site/news.cfm?newsid=19436743&BRD=2287&PAG=461&dept_id=512588&rft=6)

03/29/2008 By [COLIN GUY](#), The Enterprise

Beaumont emergency workers responded to a call that a man had jumped off the LNVA canal bridge Saturday morning, but did not locate a body.

Beaumont Fire Department Capt. Jody Herrera told The Enterprise a woman who had been driving by witnessed a white male jump off the bridge. Fire department officials felt the call was credible.

Herrera said 15 firefighters and Emergency Medical Technicians and five police officers helped search around the canal, while seven divers explored the murky water. "This is dark water. You put your hand up to your face and that's how dark it is," Herrera said.



Mark M. Hancock/The Enterprise  
**Divers search the Lower Neches River Authority canal under U.S. 69 near Plant Road in Beaumont on Saturday**

"Everything is done by touch. It's kind of an eerie situation."

Herrera said the bridge is about 25 feet high and the water is 15 to 20 feet deep. Whether someone could have survived the fall depends on several factors, he said, including the current's strength, whether the person was intoxicated, whether they can swim and whether they had weighted their pockets. "As for right at the moment we've called off the search," he said, adding that fire department officials may decide to resume the search today with the assistance of a cadaver dog.



Photo: Gadsden Times | Marc Golden  
**Etowah County Sheriff's Deputy Eddie Blythe, left, and Chief of Corrections Scott Hassell pass under the I-759 bridge over the Coosa River Wednesday in the patrol boat the department purchased to aid in enforcement and rescue operations.**

### **Tragedy demonstrated need for boat**

<http://www.gadsdentimes.com/article/20080330/NEWS/892729454/1017/NEWS>

March 30, 2008 **By Lisa Rogers, Times Staff Writer**

When a man drowned in the Coosa River last summer, the Etowah County Sheriff's Department had to borrow a boat for the investigation. The situation prompted Sheriff Todd Entrekin to obtain a boat to be used on the 55 miles of river that runs through Etowah County.

While investigators and deputies joined rescue personnel from many agencies during the two days of searching near the July 4 holiday, they realized the amount of boat traffic on the river, Entrekin said.

There also has been an increase in the number of fishing tournaments in recent years. Even though fishermen launch boats in Gadsden, those in the tournament can fish the entire length of the river in Etowah County. Entrekin said it isn't uncommon, especially in the summer, to get calls to assist boaters or other calls on the river.

There is one Alabama Marine Police officer assigned to the Coosa River in Etowah County. "If they have trouble, we need to be able to back them up," Entrekin said. "Before we had this boat, there was no way to get to them."

The Gadsden and Rainbow City fire departments and the Etowah County Rescue Squad have rescue boats, but no other law enforcement agency, except marine police, has a patrol boat. The Sheriff's Department boat will have a pilot and rescue swimmer, both of whom are deputies, who will be on board at all times the boat is in the water. Deputies won't patrol the river on any routine basis. They will be able to enforce laws such as boating under the

influence of alcohol or drugs.

The boat will be available for special events, on holidays and anytime there is expected to be an increased amount of boat traffic. "It should enhance water safety, and we'll be available to assist boaters," Entrekin said. The Sheriff's Department also has deputies who are certified divers, and the boat will be used when the dive team is needed.

Divers will assist after drownings or during other rescues as well as in searches for evidence, Entrekin said. There have been many crimes in which evidence was thrown from one of the area bridges, Entrekin said. Entrekin said the boat was paid for with discretionary money. The department was able to shop around and get a good price on a used boat. The 20-foot boat has a center console and is equipped with necessary lights, sirens and radios.

### **Car with 8 of family found in canal**

[http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Chandigarh/Car\\_with\\_8\\_of\\_family\\_found\\_in\\_canal/articleshow/2915546.cms](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Chandigarh/Car_with_8_of_family_found_in_canal/articleshow/2915546.cms)

1 Apr 2008

KURUKSHETRA: An entire village in Kurukshetra watched in stunned horror as the local administration, on Monday, fished out from the deep waters of Bhakra canal a Maruti car with eight members of a family, dead inside, in what, obviously, was a suicide pact.

The recovery of the bodies, belonging to a famous trader from Pehowa village, Mamchand and his family, from the bed of Narwana branch of the canal near Jyotisar head,

seven km from Kurukshetra, confirmed the fears that the family embraced death after being dogged by financial issues. However, many believe that the women, decked up in jewellery, were kept in the dark about Mamchand's deadly intentions.

The tragic incident goes back to March 16, when Mamchand, who used to run a rice mill, set out with wife Nirmala Devi, two sons Amit Kumar and Pradeep Kumar, their wives Seema and Babli, and three granddaughters Nanci, Nishika and Eshika in his Maruti car, leaving behind a hand-written suicide note that they were going to end their lives at Bhakhra canal.

While accusing 21 persons, whose names he scribbled on a wall in the house, of pushing them to this state, he mentioned that he found it extremely difficult to get back the money he had loaned others, while he himself was reeling in debt.

There were unconfirmed reports that one of his sons was being harassed by the police at Pehowa on behalf of some



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persons who had lent him money.

Monday's development put the total number of bodies recovered from the canal at 19. While a search was made on March 18, the police failed to make any headways and also did not register any case against the 21 persons named by Mamchand.

Many thought that the family might have decided to leave the village for good because of mounting debts and that the suicide note was a cover up. However, on Saturday, eight bodies were spotted in the Bhakra-Karnal link canal and one of those was identified as that of Pradeep by a relative.

With the police still refusing to accept the same, the relative's family on Monday hired an expert tracer, Jit Ram, from Mustapur village, who helped to ultimately unravel the mystery. Boatman Rajesh along with divers Kuldeep Singh and Madan Lal from Kurukshetra Development Board were called at noon to make a search at the spot mentioned by the tracer. Hundreds of villagers had, by then, collected and were left speechless when divers fished out the car (HR-41B-1166) from the bottom of the canal.

A crane was pushed into the service and the car was fished out at about 5 pm in the presence of Haryana agriculture minister Harmohinder Singh Chatha, who

	<p><b><u>Search And Rescue</u></b></p> <p><small><a href="http://www.oceantechnologies.com/search-and-rescue">http://www.oceantechnologies.com/search-and-rescue</a></small></p>	
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represents Pehowa constituency. While Mamchand and Amit were pulled out from the front seats, Nirmala, Seema and Babli, with Mamchand's three granddaughters in their lap were recovered from the rear seat. The morbid sight led to relatives losing their cool over, what they termed, an indifferent attitude of the police at Pehowa in the whole incident. They also gheraoed the minister and did not

allow the bodies to be taken to hospital for a post-mortem.

They finally relented with Chatha and superintendent of police Amitabh Dhillon assuring an inquiry into the suicide and action against SHO, Pehowa, Mohinder Singh. The bodies were later brought to PGI, Rohtak. The police believed that the body of Pradeep might have slipped out from the car.

## **Boy drowns as floods wreak havoc**

[http://www.nst.com.my/Current\\_News/NST/Wednesday/National/2202035/Article/index.html](http://www.nst.com.my/Current_News/NST/Wednesday/National/2202035/Article/index.html)

**2008/04/02** **By : Alang Bendahara**

KUALA LUMPUR: An 11-year-old boy drowned during a three-hour downpour yesterday which caused flash floods and traffic congestion in several parts of the city. Mohd Rafik Shamsuddin drowned after falling into a monsoon drain near his house at Rumah Panjang Jinjang here about 3pm.

Sentul deputy police chief

Superintendent Zainuddin Ahmad said Mohd Rafik, a Year Five student at Sekolah La Salle, Jinjang, was playing near the drain with his friends. "He was swept away by the strong current into a storm water retention pond about 500 metres away." He said the Fire and Rescue Department despatched a team of divers to the pond and they retrieved Rafik's body about 6pm. Meanwhile, the City Hall directorate and emergency call centre reported massive jams along several roads due to floods and fallen branches.

A spokesman said the affected roads were near Bulatan Pahang, certain parts of Jalan Mahameru and at 7th Mile Jalan Ipoh near the Selayang wholesale market.

Parts of Kampung Sepakat in Taman Greenwood in Gombak were also flooded. In Setapak and Gombak, City Hall workers used chainsaws to clear tree branches that had fallen onto Jalan Gombak and Jalan Genting Klang.



**Mechanic Pee Kiam Hiong, 36, cycling in knee-high flood water at 7th Mile, Jalan Ipoh, near the Selayang Wholesale Market yesterday evening.**

## **Mystery of severed head found on Arbroath beach**

<http://news.scotsman.com/scotland/Mystery-of-severed-head-found.3936588.jp>

02 April 2008 By Frank Urquhart

The two little red-haired sisters were playing happily on the beach in the spring sunshine, without a care in the world, when they spotted a black plastic bag among the flotsam near the high-tide mark. Curious, the girls, both younger perhaps than ten, peered inside. A split second later, they were running for home – horrified after finding the severed head of a dark-haired woman.

Last night, the gruesome discovery – and the subsequent find of a severed hand in a similar plastic bag less than 100 yards away

– had sparked what was, in all but name, a huge murder inquiry in the seaside town of Arbroath. There have been further developments this morning as police investigating the discovery of the body parts



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announced that they have found a second hand.

As detectives sealed off the area and began a detailed forensic examination of the beach

where the remains were found, police forces throughout the UK were flashed details of the discovery in the hope of identifying the victim. DNA tests, dental records and fingerprints will be used in an attempt to find out who she was.

Tayside Police said they could only treat the macabre discovery as a "suspicious death". But once the cause of death is established, it is certain to turn into a murder investigation. The drama began shortly after 10:30am yesterday, as the sisters played on the Seagait beach, which is overlooked by a row of private homes and holiday cottages. They spotted the black plastic bin bag on the beach and decided to peek inside. The terrified children then ran to their home nearby to tell their mother, who immediately telephoned the police.

Officers found the hand in another bag 100 yards closer to the town's bustling harbour. John Carswell, a builder

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working on a new house only 50 yards from where the head was discovered, said neither of the two bags had been there when he removed debris from the sand-and-shingle beach the night before. He said: "I cleaned up that beach at 4 o'clock last night – every bit of rubbish on it – and there was nothing there. I have given the police the bag of rubbish I collected at the time. There was some clothing in the rubbish I collected – that's all."

His son, also called John, had been working in the new house when he spotted the two girls on the beach.

He said: "I was working in an apartment, fitting a bathroom beside a window, looking down at the beach. "There were two red-headed little girls, one aged about six, and the other four or five, and they were playing at the water's edge. They were on their own – everyone around here looks out for the kids and makes sure they're OK. "I saw them poking about a black bin-bag, when they suddenly took off screaming in a hurry, which I thought was a bit strange. "I saw them come back with their mother, and I asked her what was going on.

She said she thought the girls had found a head, and that she had called the police. Police officers came down, and then CID arrived. They went to the black bin-bag, and



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**Dive - Avoiding Delta P**  
**K9 SAR & Autistic Victims**  
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when they opened it up, I saw some hair, and it was plainly a head." The bag containing the head was covered by a fish box until a forensics team arrived to begin a detailed examination.

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night. "A hand was then found in another bag further along the beach towards the harbour. From a cursory inspection, it appears to be a female hand." He declined to reveal how long the remains may have been in either of the bags.

Officers later produced a blue tarpaulin to cover the gruesome find, which was then removed so it can be given a more detailed examination. Detectives have said it is too early to indicate whether the two bags had been deliberately dumped at the site or had been swept in on the high tide. The investigation is being headed by Graham McMillan, who was promoted to the rank of detective chief inspector only yesterday. He said: "The remains have been found in what are very much suspicious circumstances. "This morning, two girls were playing on the beach when they made the discovery. They had looked inside the bag and suspected it was a human head. "They were obviously very distressed by that and went home and reported the discovery to their parents, who reported it to the police. Officers who arrived confirmed that it was the head of a woman.

The bag was close to the tide line and there is the potential that it was washed up on the beach. There were fairly rough seas and it was quite windy last

Mr McMillan said that officers had swept the beach for about a quarter-of-a-mile in each direction of the grim discoveries but had found no further evidence of human remains. He praised the two little girls who made the find. "They were obviously upset by their discovery, but they did the right thing. They are being supported by their parents now," he said.

The Home Office Large and Major Crime Enquiry System (Holmes) is being used by Tayside Police to assist in the investigation. Mr McMillan said: "We are investigating the national missing persons database, and so on. "We are obviously checking for reported missing persons to see if

there is potential there, but we would also like to appeal to anyone who has maybe got concerns for a friend, relative or an acquaintance that they haven't seen for a wee while."

It is understood, however, that no-one whose description matches that of the woman whose head was found on the

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beach has been reported missing in the area. Jim Millar, a local councillor, said the gruesome find had stunned the Angus town. He said: "The community is very shocked, and we are obviously very sorry for the two children who made this grim discovery. This is something you might find in a Rebus book rather than our seaside town."

### **GRISLY FIND ECHOES PAST CASE**

The case recalls that of Barry Wallace, whose severed body parts were found dumped in Loch Lomond and in the sea near Troon, in Ayrshire, in December 1999. The 18-year-old was last seen staggering away from a taxi rank towards a nightclub in Kilmarnock at about 1:30am on 5 December, 1999, having spent the evening at a Christmas party with colleagues from the Tesco store where he worked.

A huge search was launched when Mr Wallace failed to return home. Police divers discovered his dismembered arms and legs during a training exercise at Rowardennan, Loch Lomond, later that month. Mr Wallace's head was found a week later by a dog walker at Barassie Beach, near Troon, 60 miles away.

His torso was found after a police search at Manse Bay, Balmaha, Loch Lomond. Mr

Wallace's killer, William Beggs, then aged 37, took him home before sexually assaulting him and dismembering his body.

Beggs was extradited from the Netherlands to stand trial for murder in Edinburgh in 2001. Judge Lord Osborne ordered him to spend at least 20 years in jail.

### **Torso pulled from Arbroath harbour**

<http://news.scotsman.com/scotland/Torso-pulled-from-Arbroath-harbour.3952370.jp>

05 April 2008

POLICE investigating the death of a migrant worker today removed an object thought to be a torso from a harbour close to where her head and hands were found last week.

Jolanta Bledaite, 35, from Lithuania, had been living in Brechin, Angus, and was reported missing by her employer.

Remains were pulled from Arbroath harbour by police divers. A police source said: "It was more human remains." An eyewitness added: "It looked to be a human torso wrapped in a black bin bag. A police officer said to me 'that's the end of that then'. "They took it into a forensic tent."

Two Lithuanian men aged 19 and 40, were arrested on Friday and were being questioned by Tayside Police in connection with the death.



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## Police find suitcase containing body parts in Arbroath Harbour

[http://www.inthenews.co.uk/news/crime/police-find-suitcase-containing-body-parts-in-arbroath-harbour-\\$1217320.htm](http://www.inthenews.co.uk/news/crime/police-find-suitcase-containing-body-parts-in-arbroath-harbour-$1217320.htm)

Saturday, 05 Apr 2008 19:18

Police divers have found a suitcase containing body parts in Arbroath Harbour, believed to be those of 35-year-old Jolanta Bledaite.

Grampian Police's specialist Underwater Search and Rescue Dive Team found the case around 15:30 BST and recovered the remains from the water at around 17:00 BST. Although not confirmed, it is thought the body parts are those of Jolanta Bledaite, a Lithuanian woman whose head and hands were found on Arbroath beach, a short distance from the harbour area, on Tuesday April 1st.

Detective Chief Inspector Graham McMillan, the senior investigating officer, said: "It's still too early for me to say specifically what body parts are contained within the suitcase. "The contents of the case will have to be emptied and examined under a very controlled environment within the police mortuary at Police Headquarters in Dundee. "We are still searching properties in Brechin and carrying out door to door enquiries in the area in a bid to find out what happened to Jolanta. "I

would encourage members of the migrant workers community who have any information they think may be useful to the enquiry team to get in touch with us."

Two Lithuanian men, aged 19 and 40, have been arrested in connection with the incident but have not been formally charged at this stage. About 50 officers have been working full-time on the inquiry and a forensic search of the property where she lived continued yesterday.



**Police investigating death of Jolanta Bledaite find suitcase of body parts**


Tayside Police are liaising with the Lithuanian authorities and a specially trained police family liaison officer has been appointed. Her father Sarunas Bledaitis, 60, said his daughter had been in Scotland to help pay medical bills for his cancer treatment.

## Two charged in Jolanta inquiry

<http://www.thecourier.co.uk/output/2008/04/07/newsstory11173523t0.asp>

Apr 6, 2008 by Gary Cooper

DETECTIVES IN Angus early this



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morning charged two men in connection with the death of 35-year-old Lithuanian woman Jolanta Bledaite.

The men, aged 19 and 40, both Lithuanian nationals, are expected to appear at Forfar Sheriff Court later today. Their names have not been released.

Yesterday, police probing the death of the migrant worker in Angus uncovered vital evidence during a search.

Officers returned to the banks of the River South Esk in Brechin as the investigation into how Jolanta died entered a fifth day. During a finger-tip examination, they found what police described as "items of interest" relating to the inquiry. Although a spokeswoman declined to say what they were, she stressed they were not body parts.

Two men were arrested on Friday in connection with police inquiries. A huge police investigation was sparked on Tuesday after two young sisters playing on the beach near South Street in Arbroath discovered Jolanta's head and hands. As the inquiry developed, a Grampian Police diving team arrived at Arbroath Harbour on Friday evening for an underwater search. They drew a blank and

returned to the north breakwater at the port entrance on Saturday morning and spent most of the day scouring the seabed close to the harbour wall.

The first sign they had found what they were looking for came in the afternoon, when a white tent was erected next to their support unit truck. Forensic scientists were also at the scene and were peering over the harbour wall as a cream-coloured bundle was hoisted from the water shortly before 5 pm. Two divers in the water, on the ebbing tide, gave a signal to their colleagues to pull on ropes and haul it on to dry land.

Police said the grim discovery was made at around 3.30 pm by a diving specialist before later being forensically recovered. Uniformed officers cordoned off the harbour area at a number of access points from Friday and kept the public at a discreet distance as they patrolled seafront areas including Beacon Green. The suitcase was examined at the scene before being taken to the mortuary in Dundee.



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Detective Chief Inspector Graham McMillan, leading the inquiry, said at the time it was too early to say specifically what body parts were contained in the case and the contents would have to be examined in a controlled environment. Diving activity meant Arbroath lifeboat crews were unable to launch their all-weather boat Inchcape or the inshore craft Duncan Ferguson on a planned exercise on Saturday but were told they would be able to launch in an emergency.

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Although the harbour was back to normal yesterday, heavy police activity continued in Brechin. Officers maintained a round-the-clock vigil at the flat in Earlsdon House, off Southesk Street, where farm worker Jolanta lived. The property has been sealed off since Thursday, during which time a methodical examination has been carried out.

A white identification branch police trailer, used for recovered evidence, remained parked in the forecourt of Earlsdon House throughout the weekend, with a mobile unit on scene all weekend up a side street. A police unit

was also stationed at a flat at Hillview, on the outskirts of Brechin, where Jolanta was a visitor.

Door-to-door inquiries continued throughout the weekend involving police with back-up from Lithuanian, Polish and Portuguese interpreters. Senior investigating officer Mr. McMillan said, "It is vital that we establish her last known movements and to build up a picture of her lifestyle. "I would encourage members of the migrant workers community who have any information they think may be useful to the inquiry team to get in touch with us. "We understand that for some they may not speak English well, but we do have a team of translators in various languages able to assist. "As the senior investigating officer I would like to thank members of the public for the response to our appeals for information. "Whilst good detective work has paid off, receiving crucial information from members of the public has led to us establishing key lines to our enquiry."

North Tayside MSP John Swinney urged anyone able to help police to do so. "This has been a desperately sad few days for the community of Angus with the death of Jolanta Bledaite," he said. "I would like to express my shock at her



death and my sympathy to her family in Lithuania and her friends here in Angus. "Jolanta came to Scotland in search of a better life and it is heart-breaking to see how her life has ended. "Our community has welcomed many people from other countries to take part in our local economy. "They have a respected and valued part in our community and I am deeply sad this great association has been marred by this."

## THE JOLANTA BLEDAITE INVESTIGATION - A TIMELINE

<http://www.arbroathherald.co.uk/news/THE-JOLANTA-BLEDAITE-INVESTIGATION-.3969369.jp>

Apr 10, 2008

SO MUCH has happened in a very small space of time, since Tuesday of last week when the message came to our disbelieving ears in the Arbroath Herald office that a human head had been found on the shore at Arbroath.



The following timetable gives some perspective to the events.

### Tuesday, April 1

10 a.m. The first indication of the tragedy when a bag containing a human head is found on the shore, at South Street. The grim discovery was made by two local children.

1 p.m. Police confirm that the head belongs to a female human, and announce that a human hand has also been found.

### Wednesday, April 2

9 a.m. Police make an announcement that a second human hand has been found in the area.

2 p.m. The search of the beach at Arbroath is declared over, and police withdraw.

3 p.m. Forensic pathologists issue a description of the deceased and promise an artist's impression.

10 p.m. Carnoustie Coastguard contact police with a report of possible human material being found on the shore at Carnoustie.

### Thursday, April 3

9 a.m. A call to police from an employer has led them to a flat at Earlsdon House, Brechin, and police are now confident that they know the identity of the deceased.





The artist's impression is placed on hold until the victim's family can be told of the tragedy. The flat in Brechin becomes a major crime scene, and police mount a long-

term guard on it.

#### **Friday, April 4**

10 a.m. Police confirm the identity of the deceased as 35-year-old Jolanta Bledaite, from Lithuania.

12 noon. Two men are arrested in Brechin for questioning in connection with Jolanta's death.

2 p.m. Police officers conduct a search of the banks of the South Esk.

4 p.m. Police divers from the Grampian force begin a detailed search of Arbroath Harbour.

#### **Saturday, April 5**

3.30 p.m. The divers find a suitcase, believed to contain more remains of Jolanta Bledaite.

#### **Monday, April 7**

1 a.m. By now, the two men in custody have been formally charged with murder.

### **Rescue crews find body of tow-truck driver**

<http://www.commercialappeal.com/news/2008/apr/02/tow-truck-driver-missing-in-02/>

April 2, 2008 By [Hank Dudding](#)

Rescue crews today recovered the body of a tow-truck driver who was swept into a creek while trying to help a motorist on Holmes Road in southeast Shelby County.

A tow-truck operator was swept down a creek Tuesday at Holmes Road, about a mile east of Reynolds, while trying to remove a vehicle from the water. Hank Dudding The Commercial Appeal

The body was found around 2 p.m., said Shelby County Fire Department spokesman Brent Perkins.

The man, identified as Clyde Stewart, 56, was swept through a culvert under Holmes after the Mazda he was trying to tow began to float in floodwaters early Tuesday. Teams that included divers and dogs searched throughout the day today in an effort that included damming the culvert and pumping water from the creek.



Stewart's body was found about 2,300 feet north of Holmes by divers from the Shelby County Sheriff's Office and Fire Department, Perkins said.

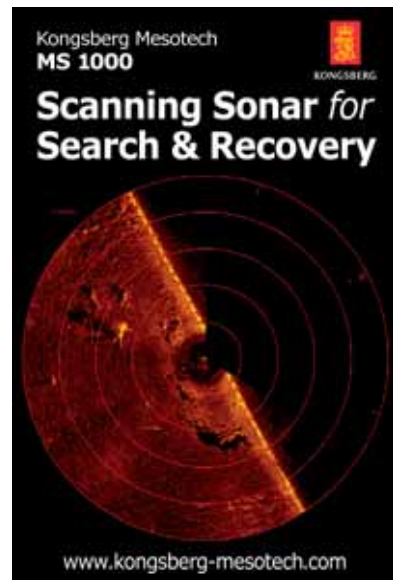
## **Tow Truck Driver, Swept Away by Flood Waters, Found Dead**

[http://www.myeyewitnessnews.com/news/local/story.aspx?content\\_id=a99250e8-10e6-4f59-b388-5795739b1255](http://www.myeyewitnessnews.com/news/local/story.aspx?content_id=a99250e8-10e6-4f59-b388-5795739b1255)

4/02/08 Reported by: [Brian Heap](#)

SHELBY COUNTY, TN – According to the Shelby County Sheriff's Office, divers have found the body of a tow truck driver, who was swept away by flood waters.

Search teams resumed efforts to find the man early Wednesday morning, April 2, 2008. The teams used high



resolution computerized mapping technology and specially trained water rescue dogs from the Shelby County Fire Department to find the body.

Shelby County Sheriff's Office officials say the driver fell into the water when he tried to pull a car out of a ditch in South Shelby County on Tuesday, April 1, 2008. Deputies say a Mazda 6 was going east on Holmes Road when it veered off and went into a ditch about a mile east

of Reynolds Road. The driver, Tony Williams, 43, was able to get out of the car, just as the water began to rise. He called for help and a sheriff's deputy, plus two tow trucks from Star Towing arrived. Deputies say one of the drivers was trying to put a hook on the car's frame, while standing on top of the car. Deputies say the car began to move and the driver fell into the rushing water. The car shifted about 20 feet into a culvert under Holmes Road.



**Divers search flood waters to find a tow truck driver who fell into the water trying to pull a car out of a ditch.**

Investigators say the tow truck driver had tied an air hose around his waist as a "makeshift lifeline", but the line broke under the force of the water.

## **Driver dies when truck runs off East Chop bluff**

<http://www.mvtimes.com/2008/04/03/news/ben-jamin-viera.php>

April 3, 2008 By Nelson Sigelman

The search ended on Saturday for an Edgartown man who, police believe, drove his pickup truck off the bluffs at East Chop on Thursday afternoon. Oak Bluffs police

and fire personnel recovered the body of Benjamin Viera, 35, at approximately 8:30 am on Saturday in Vineyard Haven Harbor.

According to Oak Bluffs Police Lieutenant Tim Williamson, a passenger on the Steamship Authority ferry Island Home departing Vineyard Haven at 7 am spotted Mr. Viera's body floating in the water off the R.M. Packer Company dock in Vineyard Haven Harbor. The passenger notified the purser, and he called the Island communications center.

The grim discovery ended a search that began late Thursday when family members called Edgartown Police to say that they were worried about Mr. Viera's welfare. Earlier in the day Mr. Viera, called Benny by those who knew him, had left a disturbing message with a friend. Detective Ken Johnson said Mr. Viera, of Jernegan Avenue in Edgartown, had recently experienced personal problems. Police attempted to locate Mr. Viera throughout the evening.

East Chop Drive wraps around East Chop and provides a popular scenic detour for visitors and Islanders driving between Oak Bluffs and Vineyard Haven. Traffic



**Divers aboard Edgartown and Oak Bluffs police boats and fireboats searched the waters off East Chop on Friday. Photo by Steve Myrick. Click photo for larger version.**

is generally light in the off-season and most of the spacious homes that line the road are unoccupied at this time of the year.

Based on their investigation, police suspect that Mr. Viera's truck went off the bluff about 2:30 pm Thursday afternoon. However, the vehicle was not discovered until much later that night. About 2 am on Friday morning, an Oak Bluffs police officer saw a damaged concrete guard post along the bluff where the end of Harrison Avenue, a dirt road, intersects East Chop Drive.

The officer saw vehicle tracks and walked down the cliff along a service track but was unable to see anything in the dark water. The fire department was called. Using powerful searchlights, police and fire officials were able to locate Mr. Viera's 2004 Chevy Silverado pickup truck in the water about 3 am Friday morning.

Lieutenant Williamson estimated the drop from the roadway to the boulder-lined base of the bluffs and the water below at more than 50 feet. "The vehicle did clear the rocks and ended up in about 15 feet of water," said Lieutenant Williamson.



**Benjamin "Benny" Viera enjoyed fishing on a friend's boat last summer. Photo courtesy Viera family. Click photo for larger version**

After the vehicle was located, Sergeant George Fisher began an immediate search and rescue operation along shore and in water. Oak police and fire personnel received assistance from Coast Guard, dispatched a foot motor lifeboat and a helicopter.



**Franklin Park Fire Department divers search a car found submerged in a retention pond off of Seymour Avenue and Irving Park Road on the perimeter of O'Hare International Airport. No one was found in the car nor in the water. (Tribune photo by Chuck Berman / April 3, 2008)**

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The vehicle was retrieved at 6:30 am Friday. John Leite, owner of JWL Transport, said he used all of a heavy hydraulic wrecker's 200-feet of cable and additional chains to reach the vehicle that he said was out some 60 feet beyond the rocks. The truck was winched up the bluff. The back window was smashed out, said Lieutenant Williamson.

The search for Mr. Viera continued throughout the day Friday on the water

and along the shore. Dive teams from Oak Bluffs and Edgartown suspended their search for Mr. Viera in the icy waters off East Chop late Friday afternoon. Lieutenant Williamson said many of the rescue personnel involved in the search had been up all night. The search was suspended so that people could get warm and get some rest, and plans were made to resume the search on Saturday morning.

Sometime over the weekend a bouquet of flowers and a cross rested against the flattened concrete guard post on East Chop Drive, near where tire tracks led to the edge of the bluff.



A cross and flowers rest on the spot where Benjamin Viera's pickup truck went off East Chop bluff. Photo by Susan Safford. Click photo for larger version

The discovery of the body brought some comfort to a family that was left struggling with their sudden and shocking loss. Joyce Viera, Benjamin's mother, told The Times that a lifelong friend of her son was on the ferry Saturday morning, and he was the one who spotted him. She said her son was a typical Islander who



enjoyed fishing and shellfishing. He was also a skilled mechanic and had worked for years at McIntosh Motors. Mrs. Viera said the family was very grateful to the Edgartown and Oak Bluffs police and fire departments for their tireless efforts. She said the community has been very supportive.

Steve Purcell of Edgartown, a friend, said Benny was a nice guy who loved to spend time with his family. "He'd help anyone," said Mr. Purcell. graveside service is planned for 1 pm on Saturday in the Oak Grove Cemetery in Vineyard Haven.

### **Divers relieved no body found in submerged Franklin Park car**

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/chi-franklin-park-vehicle-submerge-wapr04,1,768441.story>

**April 3, 2008**

Divers found no one inside a car found submerged Thursday in a Franklin Park retention pond, authorities said.

Police said it appeared someone driving along Irving Park Road went through a fence and then entered the pond, which is between Irving Park and Seymour Avenue on the perimeter of O'Hare International Airport.

When Franklin Park police found the vehicle they asked the Fire Department to send out a dive team. "We had to go in the water just to be sure," Franklin Park Police Capt.

Steve Iovinelli said. "It would be kind of embarrassing if the pond dries up and you see a body lying there."

The car was removed from the pond by 11:30 a.m.

### **1 Dead, 1 Rescued After Car Plunges in Newtown Creek**

[http://gothamist.com/2008/04/07/car\\_plunges\\_int.php](http://gothamist.com/2008/04/07/car_plunges_int.php)

**April 7, 2008**



Image, at left, from WNBC; map from [Gothamist Newsmag](#)  
Early this morning, a car drove into the Newtown Creek. Police divers pulled two men from the water, one was alive and the other was dead.

According to WNBC 4, officials believe the car "drove through a fence on Apollo Street and ended up in Newtown Creek about 3:30 a.m." Witnesses tell WCBS 2 that they heard the "car racing down" the street. And WABC 7 reports when a man in his 20s was pulled up, he was "screaming that people were still trapped below."

Divers did find a second body, and it's possible there was a third passenger.

## **Missing man's family awed by support As family searches for son's body in Hall's Creek, locals offer food, boat, prayers and assistance**

<http://timestranscript.canadaeast.com/news/article/262748>

April 9th, 2008 By Craig Babstock

Marc Demers got a call from his wife yesterday morning, around 11 a.m., after she saw the Times & Transcript. She read about the plight of a Pocologan family trying to find their son's body in Hall's Creek, after the official recovery effort was called off Sunday afternoon. Edwin Hughes, the father of the missing man, is a professional diver and is searching Hall's Creek with friends and diving colleagues in an effort to recover the body.

Michael Hughes is presumed dead after being struck by a train Friday evening and falling into Hall's Creek. He had been walking on a train trestle near Lewisville Road and was trying to save his dog from the path of an oncoming train when he was hit.

Hughes said on Monday one of the things that would be a big help is a Zodiac boat. The inflatable motorized watercraft would allow them to more quickly search the entire creek with divers. Demers, of Pointe-du-Chene, happens to have such a boat. His wife suggested they offer it to the search effort and he agreed. "We went and

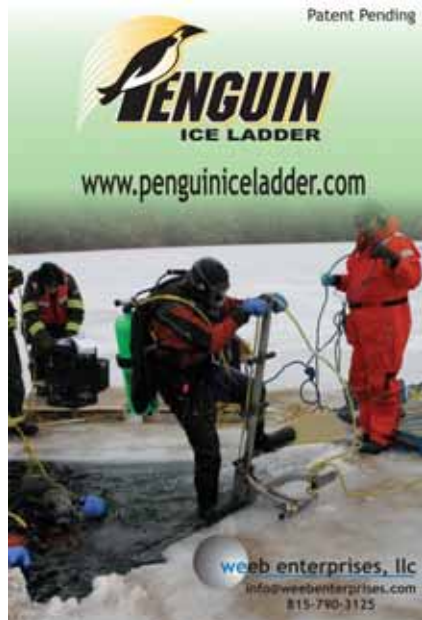
got it, filled it up with air, filled it up with gas, had a hard time starting it, but we got it going and now they're dragging the river. Hopefully it will help out," said Demers, on the bank of the creek, as his boat chugged towards the Petitcodiac River. "The boat was sitting there and they wanted one... it was no big deal."

While it may not have been a big deal to Demers, it was a very big deal to the parents of the missing man, especially Michael's mother Karen Hughes, who accepted the offer of the boat while her husband was diving in the water. "She was half crying, she really appreciated it," said Demers. "I can't even imagine what they're going through, so if we can help a little bit, good."

The Demers' were not the only people who felt the urge to pitch in and help after reading about the family's plight in the newspaper or watching it on the evening news. "It's been fantastic," said a grateful Karen Hughes, while taking a moment away from the search effort. "We had divers here (this morning) before my husband's crew even showed up." The Hughes family was joined by a number of volunteers and supporters yesterday, all feeling the pain of the loss



**Off-duty firefighters Troy Boomer and Mitch Short searched the swift waters of Hall's Creek yesterday for the body of Michael Hughes, who was knocked into the waters by a train on Friday.**  
Greg Agnew



of their son and all anxious to help recover his body. There were two off-duty firefighters from the Riverview Fire Department in the morning, wading into the water while hanging onto a rope. There was also a report of firefighters from Shediac helping out, though Hughes said so many people came and went she wasn't sure where they were all from.

Hughes said people stopped on the side of Wheeler

Boulevard and offered their condolences, saying they would say a prayer for the family. There was another woman who brought sandwiches, cookies and drinks. "The lady that runs (the Dollarama store at 165 Main Street near Hall's Creek) said socks, anything we needed, go in and get it," said Hughes. "Comfort Inn (where the family is staying) has been fantastic. Taylor Ford opened their facilities right from Saturday, the day we came up. The gentleman who owns the boat, it's been fantastic. "I just can't even begin to thank these people enough." The search was still going on yesterday afternoon and the family has said once they feel they've gone over every inch of the creek, they'll end the search.

## Shortened search frustrates family - Police, fire chief say current, ice conditions too dangerous to extend search for missing man

<http://timestranscript.canadaeast.com/news/article/262750>

April 9th, 2008 By Craig Babstock

The parents of a 22-year-old man who disappeared in Hall's Creek Friday evening have been critical of the weekend search effort to recover their son's body. But police and fire officials stand by the decision to end the search Sunday afternoon, saying the conditions were treacherous and posed a risk to the searchers.

Michael Hughes, who was living in Moncton but is originally from Pocologan, was hit by a train on a bridge near Lewisville Road Friday evening and knocked into the water. A search effort began shortly after and continued through Saturday and the early part of Sunday before being called off. At various times, participants included Codiac RCMP members and police dogs, J Division dive team members, CN Police, members of the Dieppe,



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Moncton and Riverview fire departments, paramedics and a Cormorant rescue helicopter from 14 Wing Greenwood in Nova Scotia.

Michael's father, Edwin Hughes, expressed a mix of gratitude and frustration Monday afternoon as he continued the search. He's a professional diver and several of his colleagues were assisting him. Hughes said he's thankful for the weekend search help -- "they gave a real good effort" -- but he thinks the search for the body was called off too early and the RCMP divers didn't spend as much time as they should have in the water over the weekend, out of concern for the tides and currents.

Codiac RCMP Const. Chantal Farrah said the search ended when it did because of the dangerous conditions. She said divers could no longer continue the search on Sunday because the tides were too strong and made diving dangerous. "This was a very difficult search as the muddy terrain is treacherous and the muddy waters have very strong currents and high tides this time of year," said Farrah. She added there were large ice chunks falling from the shore into the river, melting snow and ice had the river swollen and at one point a dog handler slipped and almost fell off a high bank into the water down below. "Every avenue was exhausted, but the search conditions were very treacherous in the Petitecodiac area," she said.

The decision to end the search was made by the RCMP, but it's a decision supported by Moncton Fire Chief Eric Arsenault. The fire department had members at Hall's Creek over the weekend assisting the RCMP divers in the

search and Arsenault says he spent some time there and witnessed the difficult conditions. "We have a lot of sympathy for the family," said the chief. "It's very much a difficult time for them and we understand their grief."

Arsenault said many in the department are frustrated that the search ended without the body recovered. "Nobody is happy about that," he said. "We wanted to find Mr. Hughes and understand how important it is for the family." But he says the risk of injury to those in the water was simply too great. The tide was high, the current strong and the ice on the banks unstable.

He saw one large piece of ice slide off the bank and into the water. "If anyone was operating in that area, they could have been injured or a boat could have capsized," said the chief. He also witnessed one RCMP diver get into the water, and get caught in the current. "It was moving so fast it spun the diver uncontrollably," said Arsenault. They were eventually forced to get out of the water and use other search techniques. The chief adds that while they were hoping conditions would improve on Sunday, they actually got worse.



Family members and other volunteers were in the water Sunday, Monday and yesterday, continuing the search on their own. Arsenault says they are taking a risk, but he understands this is important for the family. "It's an unsafe activity, but the RCMP told us the people in the water are certified divers," said the chief. "It's not safe, but they are trained."

## Rescue team pulls car from West Branch Divers practice technique

<http://www.recordpub.com/news/article/3601421>

4/9/08 Matt Fredmonsky Record-Courier staff writer

Members of the Portage County Water Rescue Team pulled a fully submerged Hyundai Elantra from the bottom of the Michael J. Kirwan Reservoir at West Branch State Park Tuesday afternoon.

The car had been there since a Feb. 24 incident in which police say a Ravenna man deliberately steered his wife's car onto the ice before it crashed through, sank and came to rest on its roof. The owner of the car watched the training exercise from the lake shore as divers bobbed up and down about 350 yards away near a cove on the north side. The car's owner said her husband, whom she is now legally separated from, had the car for several days before it ended up in the frigid water.

Portage County Sheriff's Deputy Mark Millhoff oversaw the dive training Tuesday. Millhoff said the purpose of the monthly training exercise was to remove the car from the



to insure the vehicle could be found after the snow melted.

The team spent all morning preparing to raise the car to the surface with a 1,000-pound air lift bag so two boats could pull the car to the shore at the west boat ramp off Rock Spring Road. Sunshine and warm temperatures greeted members of the Kent, Mantua-Shalersville, Ravenna Township, Streetsboro, Suffield and Aurora fire departments along with the Portage

lake. "So it doesn't cause a boating or ecological hazard," Millhoff said. "This one just happened to be out here so we could incorporate the vehicle. We like to train as realistically as possible for all scenarios."

The car came to rest in about 12 feet of water. The dive team performed two dives in February the day it sank to determine if anyone was trapped inside. After the car was confirmed empty, the team placed a buoy and took GPS measurements



County Sheriffs Office and Brimfield Police Department members who took part in the training.

Dave Moore, the dive team's commander, said not all the divers present took part in rigging the airbag to the car. "One diver on a rope line can cover more area quicker and use less air, which is important, than multiple divers," Moore said. The additional divers, along with other department members, were on hand to provide safety support in case of an emergency. The car emerged just before noon and broke the surface three times after the airbag was inflated. It was then towed to shore near the boat ramp where Fall and Stebbins Automotive of Mantua used tow-truck winches to right the car and pull it from the water.

Frank Tomaino, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources park officer for West Branch, said the car is the third pulled from the lake that had been driven in from the west boat ramp.

### Results soon on bone found on beach

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/04/14/2215944.htm?site=hobart>  
Apr 13, 2008

Police should know later today whether a bone found on Clifton Beach in southern Tasmania is human. It is

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thought the bone may be linked to the disappearance of a disabled boy, Jackson Kelty, and his carer, Brendan Dermody, who disappeared from the northern end of the beach a month ago. No trace of the pair has been found.

Divers are still searching the area and Police Inspector, Donna Adams, says Tasmania's pathologist has just returned from Sydney. "The pathologist will do some testing on the

bones that we have located and he will use some DNA testing using some samples that have been provided by the family members and hopefully we'll be able to get some early advice later today," he said.

Another bone found on Clifton beach last week is also being tested.

### Car plunges into St. Croix River; three of four passengers revived on site, one died later

<http://www.stillwatergazette.com/articles/2008/04/14/news/news510.txt>  
4/18/08 By ANDREW WALLMEYER [awallmeyer@acnpapers.com](mailto:awallmeyer@acnpapers.com)

At least one person is dead following a bizarre accident in which a vehicle drove into the St. Croix River in downtown Stillwater late Sunday night, submerging its four passengers in icy water for 5-10 minutes.

Sources say two of the four passengers called 911 from inside the car at 10:08 p.m., saying they had crashed into the river near the Stillwater Marina, about a block north of Mulberry Street.

Rescue divers broke the windows of the car and pulled the four passengers - three women and one man - out of the car 5-10 minutes after the 911 call was received, Stillwater Police Dispatcher Linda Thompson said Monday morning.

Three of the passengers were not breathing at the time of rescue and had to be revived before being sent to Regions Hospital in St. Paul. As of 11:45 a.m. Monday, one of the passengers had died, two remain in critical condition and one in serious condition. The vehicle - described by Stillwater Police Chief John Gannaway as a crossover SUV - was removed from the river early this morning.

Gannaway declined discuss the details of the incident this morning, noting that



**Photo by Brian Andren**  
**Rescuers pulled four people from a submerged SUV that drove into the St. Croix River near Stillwater Marina shortly after 10 p.m. Sunday. Three of the passengers were not breathing when they were rescued at about 10:15 p.m.**

he would address the media at press conference planned for this afternoon. The accident and the subsequent flurry of police, fire and rescue activity drew dozens of onlookers to the normally empty 500 block of Levee Road North on Sunday night, but none of them had witnessed the vehicle enter the water. The incident is being investigated by the Stillwater Police Department, the Minnesota State Patrol, and the Washington County Sheriff's Office.

**Two die, two remain hospitalized after SUV submerges in St. Croix River**  
[http://www.lakeelmoleader.com/articles/index.cfm?id=9980&section=homepage&property\\_id=27](http://www.lakeelmoleader.com/articles/index.cfm?id=9980&section=homepage&property_id=27)  
**April 14, 2008 Mark Brouwer and Yvonne Klinnert, Stillwater Courier**

Authorities are slowly shedding light on events at Stillwater Marina Sunday night, where murky water swallowed four people and the sport-utility vehicle in which they were traveling.

Mohanraj Pothiraj, 28, of India, died early Monday, when for reasons that are as yet unclear the vehicle plunged into the river a few blocks north of Main Street, breaking through a thin layer of ice and traveling more than 30 feet from shore. Another occupant, an Indian woman named Rohini Krishnamurthy, 27, died Tuesday afternoon. Two other women — Deepa Veluswamy, 25; and Kalai Selvi Vijaya Kumar, 25, both also of India — were rescued and remained hospitalized at Regions late Tuesday.

Veluswamy was listed in serious condition, while Kumar was listed in critical condition, a hospital spokeswoman said on Tuesday morning. Krishnamurthy's condition had been listed as critical Tuesday morning. Pothiraj and one of the women called 911 separately from mobile telephones as the vehicle was submerging, shortly after 10 p.m., near the 500 block of Levee Road. A resident from a nearby condominium complex also reported the apparent accident and helped direct police and rescue workers to it. "Hello we in the Stillwater, okay, and our car is sinking, now we in the water now.

We are going to be submerged," Pothiraj said during a call he placed at 10:02 p.m., according to a transcript that authorities released Monday. He identified himself as being near the marina's boat-rental area, but offered few specifics.

The woman, who was not identified in the transcript, called police at 10:04 p.m. She corroborated their location as being near a boat rental area, but said they were a lake in Wisconsin. As the water rose in the vehicle's cabin, police dispatchers instructed the occupants to try to break the windows and escape, however, they seemed unable to do so. "The door is got stuck. The door is got stuck and we can't open, our fingers are frozen," the woman told police. "We don't have swimming," Pothiraj said as seconds passed. "... [We] are fully submerged and die now."

Sounds of frantic talking and pounding followed. "We cannot open the window," Pothiraj said, offering his last words before the phone went dead.

Whether the vehicle slid or drifted to its resting place, authorities said they didn't know, and they did not speculate as to how or why the car ended up in the water. Rescuers found the vehicle submerged and facing shore, with its headlights aglow and its roof about a foot beneath a canopy of 40-degree water. It rested near a ramp used at the marina to raise and lower large boats into the water.

By 10:05 p.m., the condo resident had called police and was guiding them to the submerged vehicle. In near darkness and with no obvious signs of the vehicle's path, it took a few moments for police to find it. Within a few minutes, members of the Stillwater Fire Department Dive Team arrived to find the vehicle completely submerged. "If no one had witnessed it, it would have taken at least



**Stillwater Police Chief John Gannaway addresses the media during a press conference held at Stillwater City Hall on Monday afternoon regarding a fatal car accident the night before. Chris Zeuli, right, was a member of the dive team that pulled four foreign nationals out from inside a vehicle submerged about 30 feet offshore at Stillwater Marina. One person has died due to the accident. (Photo by Andy Blenkush)**

another half an hour or so," said Capt. Chris Zeuli, one of three divers first on the scene. That the vehicle's lights remained on saved rescuers' time, he said further.

Like the occupants, the divers were unable to open the vehicle's doors, although whether this was due to water pressure or the doors being locked was not immediately known. No air bubbles were released when divers broke through a rear driver's side window. Even with bright lighting, divers could see only about a foot in the murky water.

Diver Jonas Werpy entered the window and pulled three occupants, all unconscious, from it before losing feeling in his fingers and turning the job over to firefighter Tim Bell. Bell said he felt a fourth person inside the vehicle, and when he tried to pull her out by her ankle, she resisted. After a couple of tries, he managed to pull her free. "I did a foot sweep, I felt her, I tried to grab the ankle, and she actually rolled over and pulled away from me," Bell said. "I told the guys in the boat that 'This one is still alive and that she's fighting with me.'" Bell repositioned his body and tried again. After at first feeling



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resistance, perhaps a snag from a seatbelt, she reached in and pulled with both hands. This time, he pulled the woman easily through the window. "As soon as we rolled her over in the boat, I could hear her gurgle and gasp," he said.

In the ambulance, the woman she verified to emergency personnel that she was one of four occupants in the vehicle. Bell speculated that the woman resisted because she was

breathing from an air pocket trapped at the vehicle's roof. As the occupants were pulled from the vehicle, each was placed in an ambulance that left for the hospital. The last ambulance left the marina at 10:34 p.m. Firefighters estimated the vehicle was underwater 10 minutes before the last victim was removed.



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The Minnesota State Patrol and Washington County Sheriff's Office are investigating the incident. The patrol is conducting an accident reconstruction. Alcohol was not believed to have been a factor. Stillwater Police Chief John Gannaway said he doesn't know exactly how or why the vehicle ended up in the river, but said there was no obvious access to the water. Likely, he said, it would likely have been driven from Levee

Road, and down an embankment before it could reach the water.

The last time a motorist died in the St. Croix River at Stillwater was in September 2006, when a driver drove off the Stillwater Lift Bridge when its lift section was raised. The driver survived, but two female passengers died.

## Two firefighters tell of dramatic rescue in St. Croix River

[http://origin.twincities.com/ci\\_8966505](http://origin.twincities.com/ci_8966505)

4/18/08 By Mary Divine [mdivine@pioneerpress.com](mailto:mdivine@pioneerpress.com)

### Related

#### St. Croix River accident

[Desperate calls from a sinking SUV](#)

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["We can't swim": Transcript of 2nd 911 call from victims in Stillwater accident](#)

["We are... sinking": Transcript of first 911 call from victims in Stillwater accident](#)

Jonas Werpy was watching the news Sunday night at his downtown apartment when his pager went off at 10:04. Within minutes, the Stillwater firefighter and diver was at the fire station and in his dive gear, including dry suit, air tanks and mask.

By 10:13 p.m., Werpy was making his first real rescue dive. He slipped into the frigid St. Croix River, looking for some way to get into the Hyundai sport utility vehicle that had plunged into the water just 10 minutes earlier.

Werpy pulled three people out of the 33-degree water before veteran firefighter and rescue diver Tim

"T.J." Bell went in. He pulled up a fourth. When he placed the woman in the inflatable rescue boat, she rolled over and gasped. "This is a one shot in a million that you actually save people," Bell said. "You always hope for the best, but prepare for the worst. To have an incident where we actually get four people out and are able to re-establish pulse, it was a great moment for all of us." However, two of the SUV's occupants would die within the next two days. Two others remain hospitalized.

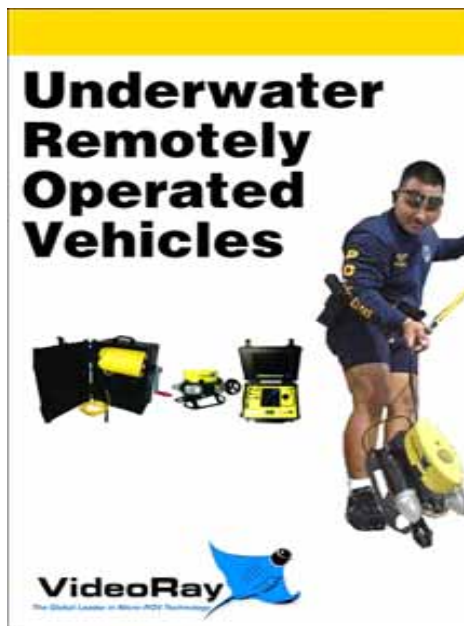


**Volunteer firefighters Tim Bell, left, and Jonas Werpy, right, stand near the sight of the Sunday night accident in which an SUV plunged into the St. Croix River. The two responded to the call and assisted with rescue efforts. Photograph taken, April 17, 2008. (Brandi Jade Thomas, Pioneer Press) (Brandi Jade Thomas)**

Werpy, 25, first tried to open the car doors. Locked. He then tried to break open a window with a knife. The knife broke; the window didn't. He resurfaced, asked for a glass punch and went back down to break the rear driver's-side window. Werpy said there was no rush of water into the car when the window shattered; meaning that there was not much — if any — air in the car. "Everyone was under water from what I saw, there was no air pocket that was visible from where I was," Werpy said.

He reached into the blackness and found the first victim — an unconscious woman — and handed her up to the crew in the boat. He then dived into the water again and found a second victim. He immediately handed her up as well. "I really couldn't see in the car, so I had to go by feel," said Werpy, a senior law enforcement major at the University of St. Thomas. "I had no clue what was what when I was down there."

By the time Werpy dived a third time, his uncovered hands — cut and bruised from breaking open the window — were nearly frozen. "I was just able to see a blur. I couldn't feel what I was touching. I was using my eyes to tell my hands what to do."



Werpy found the third victim, Mohanraj Pothiraj, 28, of Edina, but it took a little longer to maneuver him out of the car and into the waiting boat. By the time Werpy surfaced, he was told to get out of the water, and Bell went in.

Bell, who was wearing a cold-water rescue suit, but no air mask or tanks, used his foot to search the car's interior for any remaining victims. "I reached in and felt one, so I grabbed her ankle and started to pull her out," said Bell, 60, a retired Stillwater Police Department officer who has been diving since 1992. "She actually rolled over and pulled away from me. I told the guys in the boat, 'This one's still alive, and she's fighting with me.'

"Bell then reached in with both hands, grabbed her and pulled as hard as he could. She came out real easy then," he said. Bell thinks the woman he rescued, Deepa Vellusamy, 25, of Minneapolis, was "on her back with her face up against the roof of the car in the air zone. I think that's why she survived, is that she was up in the roof area with her face up in the air, whatever little bit there might have

been."



Vellusamy was able to tell rescuers there had been only four passengers in the SUV. But Bell said he broke out two more car windows and continued to sweep the car — just in case. "I'm never comfortable," he said. "I did foot sweeps in that window and then did it again and then did it again. I did a full search three times."

Bell said he stayed until a Stillwater Towing crew pulled the car from the river around 2:30 a.m. Monday and then searched it again. "I went over and looked in it, and then I was satisfied," he said. Bell, the patriarch of a three-generation crew at the Stillwater Fire Department — his son, Jon, and grandson, Jacob, also are firefighters — said he and the other rescue personnel were thrilled when paramedics were able to resuscitate the first three victims.

Water rescues are extremely rare, Bell said. Usually by the time divers locate a submerged vehicle, they're dealing with a recovery effort. Said Werpy: "You could not have planned or trained for a better coordinated rescue effort. It was an unreal result. It will probably never happen again."

All four victims were taken to Regions Hospital in St. Paul, where Pothiraj died Monday at 9:30 a.m. On Tuesday afternoon, Rohini Krishnamurthy, 27, of Minneapolis,

was pronounced dead. Kalaiselvi Vijayakumar, 25, of Minneapolis, remained in critical condition Thursday, and Vellusamy remained in serious condition.

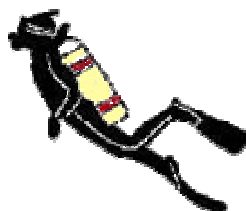
Officials said the four friends — all originally from India — had rented the car for a day trip to Stillwater. All four were working for Infosys Technologies, a software services company based in Bangalore, India, and were assigned to the Ameriprise Financial account in Minneapolis, Infosys spokesman Peter McLaughlin said.

Bell said he thinks they were likely lost, driving on a deserted dirt road about a quarter-mile north of the Stillwater Lift Bridge. "That area, after dark, really is confusing," he said. "It's not an official city street, it's a private driveway basically. I think they were just looking around and got lost and decided to turn around, and it went wrong. "If I was in India, I'd probably be driving around looking around, too," he said. "I think it was just an accident. "But maybe we'll never know what happened exactly."

#### **AFTER THE ACCIDENT ...**

The victims were taken to Regions Hospital in St. Paul, where

- ◆ Mohanraj Pothiraj, 28, of Edina, died Monday morning.
- ◆ Rohini Krishnamurthy, 27, of Minneapolis, died Tuesday.



- ♦ Kalaiselvi Vijayakumar, 25, of Minneapolis, was in critical condition Thursday.
- ♦ Deepa Vellusamy, 25, of Minneapolis, was in serious condition.

## LPD Dive Team Will Search Lake For Gun

<http://www.theledger.com/article/20080417/BREAKING/954899196>



April 17, 2008

LAKELAND | The Lakeland Police Department's dive team will be at Lake Mirror downtown by the fire station this morning looking for a gun suspected of being used in an armed robbery.

Divers will be dredging the lake and using a magnet. Activity is expected to begin about 9 a.m. The robbery occurred April 1 at 702 S. Lake Ave. where two victims were approached and robbed at gunpoint, according to police reports.

Jamale Lawson, 22, was found hiding behind a large electrical box in the immediate area of the robbery. Lawson was arrested and charged with the robbery, police said. The firearm used in the robbery is believed to have been thrown into the lake.

## PSDiver Monthly Continuing Education

	<p><b>ERDI</b> Recognizes and supports the PSDiver Monthly CE Program. Contact your ERDI Instructor for details.</p>
<p>The <b>Public Safety Diving Association (PSDA)</b> recognizes and approves the PSDiver CE program. Each month's Q&amp;A program credits 1 CEU for renewal up to a maximum of 3 CEUs from this source for each year's renewal.</p> 	

### PSDM-CE-50

- 1) Hydrogen is heavier than air.
  - a. True
  - b. False
- 2) Increasing nitrogen percent and decreasing oxygen percent results in shallower depth diving.
  - a. True
  - b. False
- 3) Breathing compressed air, (20% O<sub>2</sub> and 80% nitrogen) results in a depth of \_\_\_\_\_ feet for a 100% O<sub>2</sub> intake

- a. 140
  - b. 130
  - c. 150
  - d. 100
- 4) Using the PADI wheel what is the maximum bottom time for a dive to 80 feet?
- a. 80 minutes
  - b. 60 minutes
  - c. 50 minutes
  - d. 30 minutes
- 5) Brain Damage is very likely to occur with irreversible damage after \_\_\_\_\_ minutes with out oxygen.
- a. 4 – 6
  - b. 6-10
  - c. 10-12
  - d. more than 1 hour
- 6) How many pounds of lift will it take to start an object weighing 8500 pounds and displacing 14 cubic feet of water at a depth of 60 feet.
- a. 7700
  - b. 7800
  - c. 8000
  - d. 8500
- 7) A tank with a capacity of 100 cubic feet of volume will have \_\_\_\_\_ usable feet at 99 feet.
- a. 100
  - b. 50
  - c. 25
  - d. 0
- 8) A paid PSD dive team who recovers an object for pay and not connected with a crime does not have to follow OSH rules
- a. True
  - b. False
  - c. Don't Know
- 9) After a dive you are in pressure group K. What will be your new pressure group be after a 34 minute surface interval?
- a. B
  - b. C
  - c. D
  - d. E
  - e. F
- 10) Air embolism symptoms tend to \_\_\_\_\_ compared to DCS symptoms.
- a. Be subtle
  - b. Respond better to recompression
  - c. Appear more immediately

- 11) Never fill a tank with pure oxygen.  
a. True  
b. False
- 12) If a diver is not breathing it is better to call for help before administering first aid.  
a. True  
b. false

## TEAM DISCUSSION TOPICS:

### STRESS –

Discuss the characteristics of pre-dive stress.

Give examples of how stress can manifest on your dive calls.

Ask your experienced divers to share personal experiences that deal with stressful dive calls and discuss ways to help your team recognize and manage stressful situations on a dive site.

## Galveston Police Department Dive Academy

### SPRING PROGRAMS - SCHEDULE CHANGE

Spring 2008 [Public Safety Diving Courses](#)

Galveston, Texas May 9, 10, and 11  
Underwater Crime Scene Series -  
Weapons and Body Recovery  
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### GALVESTON, TEXAS

May 30, 31, and June 1

Underwater Crime Scene Series

### *Small Object & Skeletal Remains Recovery*

PREPAID advanced registration - \$165.00 per person. After May 23, 2008, registration will be \$195.00.

**REGISTRATION MUST BE IN GALVESTON  
BY MAY 27 via FAX, MAIL OR EMAIL**

The Underwater Crime Scene Series programs  
are stand alone courses and can be attended in  
any order.

Payment is required at the time of registration. Please make check or money order payable to: "Galveston PD Training Division" and return to 601 54th Street, Suite 200, Galveston, Texas 77552.

For more information or to RESERVE spots, call 409- 765- 3642 or FAX Registration forms to 409-765- 3641.

### **Cancellation Policy**

Cancellations received prior to 3 weeks before the start date of the class will receive a full refund. Cancellations received 8-14 days prior to class start date will receive a 50% refund. Cancellations received 0-7 days prior to class start date will not receive a refund.

### **Medical and Liability Release Forms**

These forms MUST BE COMPLETED and submitted before students will be allowed to participate. The forms can be downloaded below or at [GPD- DiveAcademy](#).

**The forms may be submitted in advance or at the start of the course. The medical release is a standard RSTC Medical Release. Participants are asked to fill out the questionnaire. If any question is answered 'Yes' - a physician release is necessary. Medical conditions that require a physician release will disallow divers participating in the scuba exercises if a medical release is not presented PRIOR to the start of the programs\*.**

Prerequisites: Scuba participants MUST be a minimum of OW certified with a dive log showing no less than 15 dives.

Students MUST participate in all evolutions to qualify for certificate of completion and payment will NOT insure certificate.

### **Watermanship skills will be tested.**

Participants must provide their own basic scuba gear. If necessary, some extra gear will be available but prearrangement will be required to insure you will have what you need. Please bring tanks and weights if you are driving. Air refills will be provided at no cost.

**At least 2, rigged 13cf Pony bottles per team are REQUIRED. Pony bottles will be available at the facility at no charge BUT numbers are limited.**

## **Underwater Crime Scene Series** **Specialties**

The **Underwater Crime Scene Specialties** are designed to present a new aspect of Public Safety Diving to Fire, Police and SAR Dive Recovery Teams. These courses offer classroom lecture, theory, controlled pool work and real dive scene scenario training. Participants will be introduced to a variety of new skills and will be shown and allowed to practice, safety measures and techniques that will hopefully enhance their skills and abilities.

**These specialties are recognized by the [Public Safety Diving Association \(PSDA\)](#) and [Emergency Response Diving International \(ERDI\)](#).**

## **Small Evidence and Skeletal Remains**

The Underwater Crime Scene, Small Evidence and Skeletal Remains course will focus on basic digital crime scene photography, fingerprint science, small object recovery and the recovery and handling of skeletal remains in a zero visibility environment.

Participants will be introduced to fingerprinting techniques, process fingerprints, and then photograph, document and process a top side crime scene. The fingerprint science portion of the seminar is not designed to teach divers to be fingerprint technicians. It is designed to teach them how fingerprints are deposited, where they are most likely found and knowing how fingerprints are processed and developed, students will learn how to best preserve fingerprints during underwater recoveries.

Participants will be introduced to the Lane Search Pattern and will practice skills in a controlled environment. Students will conduct dives in a safe environment to hone skills prior to open water diving.

### **Our scenarios are real.**

**Students will be tasked with a crime scene and will use the skills and lessons learned to evaluate a dive site and underwater scene. Students will preserve, protect and process an underwater crime scene in zero visibility. Safety, techniques, documentation and attention to detail will be challenged and tested.**

## **Weapons and Body Recovery**

Participants will gain classroom knowledge on basic evidence handling, terminology, safety issues, standards information and concepts of the job of a Public Safety Diver. Participants will practice those classroom skills to an acceptable level of proficiency in a clear water pool using blacked out masks and will gain real experience in methods of underwater search and recovery in the simulated zero visibility environments. During our scenario training, participants in the Weapons and Body Recovery Course will successfully perform a search and evidence recovery of at least one weapon and will successfully perform a body recovery. Participants will also be challenged with an underwater obstacle / confidence building course that will test their ability to handle a variety of stressors including entrapment problems and self rescue issues.

Each scenario will be a separate crime scene and the participants will be responsible for assessing the site, gathering intelligence, setting up the dive and recovering either a weapon or a body. Each team must complete the recovery and submit all documentation related to their task to successfully complete the course.

### **[GPD Dive Academy](#)**

**601 54th Street, Suite 200  
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**For more information or to RESERVE spots,  
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Ronny Phillips – GPD Training Officer  
[RPHILLIPS@ci.galveston.tx.us](mailto:RPHILLIPS@ci.galveston.tx.us)**

**FAX Registration forms to 409-765- 3641.**

## Senior Moments

Two elderly ladies had been friends for many decades. Over the years, they had shared all kinds of activities and adventures. Lately, their activities had been limited to meeting a few times a week to play cards.

One day, they were playing cards when one looked at the other and said, "Now don't get mad at me .. I know we've been friends for a long time, but I just can't think of your name! I've thought and thought, but I can't remember it. Please tell me what your name is."

Her friend glared at her. For at least three minutes she just stared and glared at her. Finally she said, "How soon do you need to know?"

\*\*\*\*\*

Three sisters, ages 92, 94 and 96, live in a house together. One night the 96-year-old draws a bath. She puts her foot in and pauses. She yells to the other sisters, "Was I getting in or out of the bath?"

The 94-year-old yells back, "I don't know. I'll come up and see." She starts up the stairs and pauses "Was I going up the stairs or down?"

The 92-year-old is sitting at the kitchen table having tea listening to her sisters. She shakes her head and says, "I sure hope I never get that forgetful, knock on wood." She then yells, "I'll come up and help both of you as soon as I see who's at the door."

\*\*\*\*\*

Two elderly women were out driving in a large car - both could barely see over the dashboard. As they were cruising along, they came to an intersection. The stoplight was red, but they just went on through.

The woman in the passenger seat thought to herself "I must be losing it. I could have sworn we just went through a red light." After a few more minutes, they came to another intersection and the light was red again. Again, they went right through. The woman in the passenger seat was almost sure that the light had been red but was really concerned that she was losing it. She was getting nervous.

At the next intersection, sure enough, the light was red and they went on through. So, she turned to the other woman and said, "Mildred, did you know that we just ran through three red lights in a row? You could have killed us both!"

Mildred turned to her and said, "Oh, crap, am I driving ?"

\*\*\*\*\*

Three retirees, each with a hearing loss, were playing golf one fine March day. One remarked to the other, "Windy, isn't it?"

"No," the second man replied, "it's Thursday."

And the third man chimed in, "So am I. Let's have a beer."

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