Deputy Bryan Gross, 29, drowned in the North Platte River July 28 while trying to rescue a young girl.

ANOTHER FATALITY!

Shreveport Fire Department Dive Team A Special Operation

Kidney Problems and Diving

Found On The Web: Reverse Blocks
This month a long awaited article has finally arrived from the Shreveport Fire Department. After the extraordinary incident was mitigated, there was a lot of discussion as to whether they should have made the dive or waited for a commercial dive company. Because of the nature of the dive, there were opinions that it was a commercial dive and some did not think the dive team should have made the dive at all. They did the dive and did it very well.

Without standards guiding us and only interpretations of the Commercial Dive Exemption, how do we define such a call?

We wade through the various OSHA standards and face numerous opinions about what applies to us as well as those who believe we are totally exempt from OSHA.

At some point we have to acknowledge that we are exposing ourselves to risk. Individually we either accept or refuse the job based on our personal assessment of that risk. We may have supervisors who are doing the same thing relative for the team but it is the individual at risk who ultimately decides to dive or not. When we are faced with simple issues like recovering a stolen vehicle in still shallow water that affords no rescue, we are performing a recovery. That equates to a commercial dive operation.

Some suggest we should not do that job because it is a commercial operation. Here on the Gulf Coast, we should wait for a commercial dive team to respond. They are able to move easily and can come do the job for surprisingly reasonable rates. Commercial divers are easy to find on weekends and holidays too. ...Right? That was sarcasm by the way. It would be very expensive and highly impractical to expect a commercial dive team to do such a simple job.

How ridiculous do we really want to get? At what point do we use common sense? Do WE understand that recovery is – according to the only standards we have to work from, a commercial dive operation?

It has been interpreted and argued that the OSHA exemption applies to us simply because of the way it is worded. “Search, rescue, and related public safety diving by or under the control of a governmental agency.” No where is RECOVERY mentioned. So maybe “related” is the functional word. But the exemption includes this wording “It is pointed out that this exclusion does not apply when work other than search, rescue and related public safety diving is performed (e.g., police divers repairing a pier).” So, “related” is up for interpretation too.

In my opinion, the dive was one of the few definable “Public Safety” dives I have ever read about. It was also, by OSHA definition, a commercial dive. When there is risk to the public we are sworn to protect, we cannot wait. We have to assess the risk, weigh our options and do what is necessary and possible. That is our job. Isn’t it a shame that we have to make decisions based on interpretations and adaptations of standards that do directly not apply to us? Or worse, to be second guessed after the fact based on opinion? Wouldn’t it be nice to have at least a council of PSD agencies to oversee our community and be proactive in the development of PSD standards? Those of us who have lobbied for national standards are not looking for someone to hold our hands and lead us, rather to set a definable path for all of us to travel.

I have heard that at least three PSD training agencies have confirmed attendance at the DEMA meeting. Now is the time for them to all come together and build the foundation for a PSD Training Council.

Mark Phillips
Editor / Publisher

If you would like to discuss this topic or any other, join our discussion group: CLICK HERE TO JOIN
The Shreveport Fire Department Water Rescue and Recovery Team is the oldest technical rescue team in the State of Louisiana. Established in 1963 by a group of firefighters using the old Aqua Lung type gear, these men performed diving/recovery operations throughout Northwest Louisiana and East Texas. Until the late 1980’s, this was the only team in the area. The team is now comprised of 28+ divers distributed over three platoon type shifts. The team is a full time response unit with a frontline response vehicle. Diving/recovery/repair operations are performed by on duty divers when possible. If there are not enough on duty members or the operation requires additional divers, members have pagers that are used to alert them of the event.

On January 10, 2008, contractors had just started their day at the Amiss Water Treatment Plant which treats and supplies all water for the Greater Shreveport Metropolitan area. They had gathered their tools and were supposed to replace a valve to one of the main city water distribution tanks. There would be nothing routine about what was to happen over the next several hours.

 Contractors were tasked with cutting the bolts off a valve so the valve could be replaced with a new one. As contractors began to cut the bolts, water began to spray from the valve. Before plant personnel could get to the valve and investigate why water was coming from the valve, it broke loose and the pressure from the water pushed the piping, (approximately 36” in diameter) back 2 feet or more and caused the vertical pipe coming from the pit to move back at an angle. The water rushing out of the pipe was spraying into the other end of the existing pipe at an angle and was then deflected into a pit that was approximately 50’ long x 15’ deep x 12’ across. It is estimated that some 3000 GPM
of water at a temperature of 40 degrees was being diverted into this pit. This event started around 08:30 and crews tried to use pumps in an effort to remove the water in the pit so workers could enter the pit and turn the valves to this pipe off. This failed, and crews were unable to enter safely or successfully. The dive team was called around 10:30.

A call requesting the team was made to the On Duty Assistant Chief. This call was relayed to District Chief and Team Coordinator Kerry Foster. After gathering information, a call went out to the on duty A-Shift Dive Team Shift Leader Capt. Craig Mulford. He had also received the request and the team was being assembled. An all call, (notifying all fire stations), went out for all on duty divers. As members were being assembled, it was suggested that the Fire Department may want to send a medic unit and other additional resources. Upon arrival, Capt Mulford made the decision to activate a full response for this event. When crews arrived, incident command was established and would later be cycled into a major event. There was nothing that could be done until all divers and units were on scene. The team, in conjunction with the Battalion Chief who was also a diver, would establish a Site Safety Plan, Base of Operations, Safety Operations, Medical Operations, and a support team staffed by a pump crew. The On Scene Diving Operations Officer had the ultimate responsibility of team members.

The Team Coordinator was called as this was being placed into operation and as personnel began to realize the magnitude of the event.

After all operations and personnel were in place, two team members were sent into the space down a ladder into the water. The water was approximately 40 degrees and was about 2 ft above all exposed valves in approx 8 feet of water inside the pit. The mission was to enter the space, close one valve and the water would stop. As divers started their operations, it became apparent this was not working. A request was made to engineers and plant workers to figure out how to isolate the valves. As things progressed, the team asked if they could simply shut down all valves within this space. The authorization was given in an effort to de-escalate the event. Again divers attempted to close all valves which were 2 valves approximately 12 inches and one valve.
approximately 36 inches on each end for a total of 6 valves. After all valves were closed as much as divers could get them closed, divers were rotated with a fresh team. This team was to re-evaluate the space to see if something had been missed and attempt to close the valves more. This team would be rotated out and a fresh team was sent in using dry suits. All other members had been using wet suits because of the lack of available space and ease of use within the area. This last team entered the space with a 48 inch pipe wrench and a piece of pipe to assist with leverage. The team went from one valve to the other using the large wrench to close any valves. It was isolated to one valve that took another 20-40 turns using all the strength they had to get the valve to turn with the assistance of the wrench and pipe. The water flow began to diminish and eventually the flow would come to a halt. The entire operation took approximately 2 hours, rotating 8 divers from entry and backup divers.

EOC Activated
The Emergency Operation Center under the direction of the Caddo/Bossier Office of Homeland Security and Defense was activated and remained in service for more than 16 hours. The center was tasked with assisting city agencies to reroute water sources from other cities to offset some of the lost residual pressure. In essence, the city did not have enough pressure to wash your hands in a sink throughout most areas of the city. Outside Fire Districts were requested to standby with water tenders in the event of a fire.

No water in city
The results of the break in the line left the city virtually without water for more than 8 hours. After the valve had been secured, a boil advisory was given in the event any contaminates had entered the system. The advisory was lifted a couple of days later after it was confirmed there were no issues with contaminates.

Diving operations
The Diving Operations resulted in the mobilization of all on duty divers and placing a second platoon on standby as it was evident things were not going as planned and divers were becoming fatigued due to the temperature of the water. Bossier City Fire Department Dive Team was also placed on an alert status and was preparing to respond when the event was finally brought under control.

Cold water exposure
We have all been placed in a situation where cold water emersion was inevitable. In this event, it became apparent that the temperature was more of a problem because divers had approximately 3000 GPM flowing on top of their heads as well as the surrounding water. The decision to place in operation a medical sector proved to be a wise decision which could have proven useful in the event of cramps and cold water exposure. The on scene Medic Unit was told to turn the heater inside their unit to as high a temperature as possible in the event a diver needed warming.

**Conclusion**

Although the operation was successful, there were a few deficiencies that the team is in the process of resolving. It was thought that a city with the run volume noted from the past could operate with 4 diving systems. This has since been resolved with the purchase of 2 more systems leaving the team with 6 complete systems that stay in a ready position at all times. We also found that at least 1 dry suit had been exposed to some type of hydrocarbon in the past and during the operation a cuff ripped. We have since been able to replace/repair these and in addition have purchased 2 new dry suits.

As time was evolving throughout this event, it was becoming critical that if the valves could not be closed, all water pressure would be lost to the city completely because the plant would need to shut down all pumps to the plant. This would have meant that what little residual water was available would have been lost.

Thanks to the persistence and professional training this team has acquired over the years, the event was resolved and business was back to normal within several hours.

Battalion Chief Kerry W Foster has been with the Shreveport Fire Department for 32 years. He has been a member of this team since 1978 and has been the Coordinator since 1994. He has documented more than 30 recoveries, 300+ operations and has been a leader in the development and performance of this team. He is an instructor in Hazmat, Special Operations, K-9 SAR, and Counter Terrorist Education. He is a past member of Tennessee Task Force One, and is presently Task Force Leader for Louisiana Task Force 3 USAR.

For more information you may contact him at kerry.foster@shreveportla.gov.
At Lake Tahoe, a scuba diver's body is recovered after 17 years
August 09, 2011|By Bob Pool, Los Angeles Times

The well-preserved remains of Donald Christopher Windecker are discovered on an underwater shelf. Accompanied by a friend, he set out for a dive on July 10, 1994, and never returned.

Authorities at Lake Tahoe on Monday solved the mystery of a scuba diver who disappeared 17 years ago in the mountain lake's deep, frigid waters.

The well-preserved body of Donald Christopher Windecker was discovered July 23 on an underwater shelf, 265 feet below the surface. A remote-controlled mini-submarine with a robotic claw raised the remains July 27. The recovery occurred on the lake's west side, near Rubicon Point.

Officials delayed releasing Windecker's name until dental records confirmed his identity. Four more divers remain missing in the same area, which is infamous for swallowing up victims.

Windecker's body was clad in a wetsuit and buckled into a weight belt and air tank. The scuba gear bore a certification from 1994, officials with the El Dorado County Sheriff's Department said. Just beyond the ledge where Windecker's body was found, the lake plunges to a depth of 1,645 feet.

News reports at the time of Windecker's disappearance described him as a 44-year-old former city planner from Reno who set out for a dive on July 10, 1994. Accompanied by a friend, Windecker planned to swim to a depth of about 100 feet.

But trouble occurred toward
the end of the dive as the pair began to ascend. Windecker reportedly experienced difficulty with his equipment and began to sink. His companion tried to help but began running out of air and was forced to surface.

"His remains are in amazing physical condition," said Sheriff's Sgt. Jim Byers. "We'll be able to do a thorough autopsy. He may have had a heart attack or a stroke or maybe just ran out of air. Hopefully we'll determine what happened." Windecker's body was discovered by a group of "mixed gas" divers exploring cliff walls, Byers said.

Mixed gas divers can safely descend to about 350 feet without suffering nitrogen narcosis, or "rapture of the depths," among other problems. Conventional scuba divers have to stop at about 100 feet.

Byers said those in the diving group were startled to see Windecker's motionless form. "It was pretty scary for them. They were wondering, 'What's this person doing down here?'" he said. He did not identify members of the group.

The surprising condition of the body is attributable to the 35-degree water and the increased pressure at the 265-foot depth, Byers said.

He dismissed speculation that Windecker had gone undiscovered for so long because his body had been caught in underwater tunnels that legend says connects Lake Tahoe with Pyramid Lake northeast of Reno.

Some Tahoe locals insist that bodies of boaters and swimmers who drowned in Lake Tahoe have turned up Pyramid Lake and vice versa. They insist the tunnels are the result of volcanic activity.

"Lava tube connections between Lake Tahoe and other lakes are an urban myth," Byers said.

Other stories about oddities beneath Lake Tahoe have been debunked by experts. Some in the region insist that famed diver and naturalist Jacques Cousteau explored the lake in a mini-submarine in the mid-1970s and emerged pale and shaken.
Asked what he'd seen and filmed on the lake bottom, Cousteau reportedly replied, "The world isn't ready for what's down there."

Depending on who is telling the story, Cousteau either encountered a Loch Ness-type monster that locals have dubbed "Tahoe Tessie" or came upon a bunch of dead people.

Among those said to populate Lake Tahoe's dark depths are Chinese laborers who helped build the railroad across the Sierra Nevada in the 1860s. Others contend the watery grave contains card cheats and mobsters killed by the Mafia and anchored to the lake bottom by concrete-filled casino ice buckets, "wearing pinstriped suits, with sneers on their faces and bullet holes in their foreheads," as the San Francisco Chronicle put it in 2004.

Tales persist that a "longtime Tahoe fire chief" responded to a drowning call and found the body of a well-preserved Native American girl, fully clothed in a 19th century ceremonial dress, floating in the lake.

But Cousteau never explored the lake. Some say his grandson, Philippe Cousteau Jr., visited there, but only for a 2002 speaking engagement. And authorities say they have used sonar and minisubs to map the lake's bottom and never found such a graveyard. Nobody knows the name or affiliation of the supposed "longtime Tahoe fire chief."

They found Donald Christopher Windecker, though. Although El Dorado County authorities say he had no close relatives, those who counted him as a friend are thankful this mystery has been resolved.

Calgary divers angered by rescue snub


August 09, 2011 BY KATIE SCHNEIDER, CALGARY SUN

Some members of the Calgary Fire Department are furious they weren't given the opportunity to help with a Chestermere drowning call they believe could have had a happier ending.

On Saturday night, Richis Katumbay, 33, an inexperienced swimmer not wearing a life jacket vanished underwater while tubing on the lake. RCMP divers from B.C. were on scene Tuesday still searching for Katumbay's body after a private team from Edmonton was called off Sunday. But the tragedy in the bedroom community east of the city has members of the Calgary Fire Department's dive team saddened, fuming, and left scratching their heads why their offers to lend their expertise was snubbed.
If the help was accepted, the life of the father of seven could have been saved, said one fire captain who the Sun has agreed not to name. “I don’t know why we weren’t called in,” he said. He said if they were able to pull Katumbay out in 90 minutes, as they strive to do, he may have survived. “When we are 10 minutes away we could have done a rescue that night and/or recovered him immediately,” he said.

“We were chomping at the bit to help the family out and the community out that now has a dead body in its playground. “The men are devastated.”

After learning about the drowning through dispatch, Calgary fire offered to send its aquatics team to help, but they were told they were not needed said spokesman Brian McAsey, a former CFD diver who understands the frustrations. “It’s not our jurisdiction — unless requested by them we can’t just show up,” he said.

Rocky View Fire Services from Chestermere were first on scene and soon after Strathmore Fire Services and RCMP arrived with rescue boats. But RCMP Sgt. Patrick Webb said by the time Calgary Fire knew about the incident and offered help, they weren’t required.

Webb said any agency can be called to help with a rescue, including Calgary fire, but a recovery is different. “We have a list of four different agencies that can provide service, not CFD — it costs too much,” Webb said. “We’ll do whatever we need in a rescue — in a recovery we have to look at all other things ... cost is only one of them. 
But the frustrated captain, a veteran of the department, said it should be about life and death, and not cost, especially when the scene is not far away.

“It’s unacceptable,” he said. “It’s about humanity and getting him back to his kids.

“To sit on our hands and not be (dispatched), it’s a low point of the 30-year dive team and for what? For money.”

‘Foot’ hooked in Lake Marie was a Halloween prop

[Link]

8/11/2011 By Lee Filas and Paul Biasco

Divers and sonar teams spent nearly 10 hours searching an Antioch-area lake Wednesday after a child reported snagging what he thought was an unattached human foot that fell off his line just feet from the boat.

Search crews eventually spotted the lifeless missing foot in the murky waters and were relieved to find that it was only a Halloween prop.

“He was a reliable source,” said Gurnee Fire Department Battalion Chief John Skillman. “He did spot a foot, but it wasn't human.”

Divers from the Antioch Fire Department Dive Team and investigators from the Lake County sheriff's office responded to Lake Marie around 9 a.m. after three fisherman trolling early Wednesday morning reported the hooked foot, officials said.

The fake foot was eventually found with the help of side-scanning sonar around 6:30 p.m., and the search was called off, according to the sheriff's office.

Lake County sheriff's Lt. Christopher Thompson said deputies were called to the southwest shore of the lake where the two adult fisherman and the child hooked the foot.

Thompson said in a release Thursday that the prop was found at 5:30 p.m.
New equipment, training a plus for Fire Dept. Dive and Rescue Team as it responds to calls

Being around for 10 years, the Ridgeland Fire Department Diving Team has quite a presence in water rescue missions around the county and state and it's growing. The volunteer team of 40 divers - out of 65 employees in the fire department - devotes lots of time to training.

This year, the team got $50,000 in new equipment thanks to a Homeland Security grant and fundraisers.

This summer, the team undergoes recertification classroom and water training and using much of the new equipment. "The guys like to train," said Assistant Chief Steve Wilson, leader of the diving team and certified dive instructor. "More often than not, they're asking me to do stuff. That speaks pretty well of them."

And the men enjoy using the new 300-foot communication lines, a noise-reducing communication box, spare air panel and four Kirby Morgan dive helmets. "I don't think anyone else has our equipment," said six-year team member Marcus Cupstid, 34, of Gluckstadt. "It's amazing the kind of equipment we have."

The team has a new spare air panel to give extra air during missions and an additional air supply line for divers. Continuous support from the Ridgeland Fire Department is also beneficial to the team.

All of the equipment bought over 10 years is valued at $250,000, Wilson said. The dive helmets, worth $6,000 each, are perfect for HazMat and contaminated water dives. "The big thing is, we're able to totally encapsulate for a contaminated water dive," Wilson said. "Plus, we do overhead environments and lift or salvage operations so the diver (has to) have head protection."

Ridgeland's diving team is called upon for assistance on the Ross Barnett Reservoir, Pearl River, Lake Caroline, Lake Cavalier and other water bodies in Madison County.

This year, with the flooding of the Mississippi River, the team was on standby to assist, said
fire chief Matt Bailey.

From growth in recent years from volunteers to equipment and capability, the team is available to the Southwest Regional Response Team for the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency. This team provides assistance to a 10-county area of the state, including Clairborne, Copiah, Hinds, Issaquena, Madison, Rankin, Sharkey, Simpson, Warren and Yazoo counties.

Bailey added that the team is also part of the Central Mississippi Task Force. As part of a statewide mutual aid agreement between fire stations, the dive team is also available to any fire department in the state. "We're probably one of the most capable teams in the state," said Capt. Craig Nash, 38, a training officer. "Of course, the training goes a long way."

City officials say drowning-related deaths account for a majority of the emergency calls received by the diving team. Bailey said the number of calls per year for drowning rescue missions varies. They also receive a number of other calls for assistance in recovering sinking boats, evidence recovery for criminal investigations and flooding assistance.

From all of the training and dive missions, Ross Dorr has spent three years on the team and calls himself and teammates "well-rounded." "Better equipment makes you more comfortable," said Dorr, 35, of Gluckstadt. "We've got the best training, instructors and we're pretty much ready to go."

Seven to eight firefighters have been hired in Ridgeland in the past two years and Wilson said the majority of new hires ask to join the diving team.

"It's a tremendous effort to get the grants to supplement what they do," Bailey said. "You have people like Steve (Wilson) that do such a good job and has a vision, and we're fortunate to follow that vision."

Monroe County Dive Team folds due to lack of support

August 16, 2011 By ANNE JUNGEN lacrossetribune.com

The Monroe County Dive Team has dissolved, with officials saying it lacked the membership and county support needed to keep it afloat.

"It won't have a negative impact until someone drowns in Monroe County," team co-founder and adviser Larry Axelsen said. "And we have a lot of water in Monroe County. A lot of people don't know that."
No other departments in Monroe County are qualified for water rescues, leaving rescue crews to rely on assistance from volunteer dive teams in neighboring La Crosse, Jackson and Juneau counties.

"There won't be any chance for a save," Axelsen said. "It will be recovery only."

Monroe County Emergency Management jettisoned the dive team years ago from its umbrella, leaving it in limbo. While the sheriff said the team operated independently, unit leader Jim Bainter disagrees.

"I don't care what he says, we're part of the sheriff's department," he said.

Monroe County Board Chairman Rick Irwin knew nothing of the team's decision to disband earlier this month, saying he had no contact with the unit. He's now open to discussions with Bainter.

Sheriff Pete Quirin called the dive team a benefit to the community, though rarely used. The team helped pull two cars from the water last year and last went after a swimmer in 2007. "It would be nice to have one here," he said, "but we just don't have the assets to fund it."

Axelsen established the all-volunteer team in 1987 with a now-retired sheriff to fill a public safety void.

In its prime, the team had 35 members working out of bureaus in Sparta and Tomah. Divers paid $1,000 for their own gear; donations took care of the rest. "We tried to offer a service that was second to none and at no cost," said Axelsen, who retired as a diver in 1999.

The problems began about three years ago when the team's van broke down, Bainter said. The county board didn't know it, but the unit had an agreement with the county to provide maintenance, fuel and insurance for the van, plus insurance for the divers.

The board decided to cut assistance for the van but continued to pay for the divers' insurance, Bainter said.

Donations fixed the van, but morale and participation faded without county support. The team had only 10
members when it decided to fold Aug. 2.

"It was a sad day," Bainter said. The unit donated its equipment to dive teams in La Crosse and Black River Falls and fire departments in Wilton and rural Sparta. Bainter doesn't see the local unit coming back. "The team needs the county to be a team," he said. "But I still believe we need this service."

Committee discusses water rescue resources

http://www.spencerdailyreporter.com/story/1753381.html
August 16, 2011 By Gabe Licht, Daily Reporter Staff

Following the rescue of a severely autistic, 11-year-old Spencer girl from the Little Sioux River July 30, Spencer public safety officials have been discussing the need for water rescue equipment.

Members of the Spencer Public Safety Committee heard from Spencer Police Chief Mark Lawson and Spencer Fire Chief Doug Duncan Monday evening, ultimately authorizing city staff to continue investigating the purchase of such equipment.

The July 30 rescue marked the third time in five months where rescue equipment could have been used by the city, including retrieval of four intoxicated individuals in a canoe this summer, utilizing an SPD officer's duck boat, and the rescue of a Pizza Ranch delivery driver March 4.

"We're limited in our water rescue resources," Duncan said. "We do have what we call surface water rescue equipment. That was designed more for conditions like at Stolley's (Park and Pond), with ice, etc. The river, we'd almost classify that as a swift water rescue."

Currently, the city utilizes the Arnolds Park/Okoboji Fire Department dive team. "They're very good. They'll come at any time and try to tackle anything," Duncan said. "The problem is, you're probably looking at a solid hour to get them here, to get them organized ... and into the water."

Utilizing a risk-benefit method, Duncan said an hour wait is not acceptable.

"We have to look at the river as a risk," Duncan said. "Most of the time, when this happens, it's during high water."

Various types of equipment could fit the need, but Duncan and Lawson were seeking approval before they investigated further. Regardless of the type of equipment, it is estimated to cost $25,000, including training.

Duncan said a Spencer-based team would differ from the Lakes area
divers because of the difference in water depth and space. An inflatable boat with a "mud motor" may be the best option, he added. "It's designed for this type of situation and could also be used at Stolley's and other gravel pits," he said.

Mayor Reynold Peterson questioned if three rescues justified a $25,000 purchase and asked about the possibility of sharing the equipment, and cost, with other cities and counties. Lawson said he would check with Clay County Emergency Management Director Eric Tigges and the Clay County Board of Supervisors for the possibility of such partnerships before the issue is revisited by the committee.

In other business, the committee:
* Discussed the safety of individuals jumping from bridges and swimming in the Little Sioux River, ultimately deciding to post signs discouraging jumping from bridges. Enforcing a swimming ban is more difficult because the Iowa Department of Natural Resources has jurisdiction over the river and Spencer can only regulate swimming if city property is used to enter the river.

Dash cam video shows chase ending with bridge jump
Aug 24, 2011 By Jim Shannon

BATON ROUGE, LA (WAFB) - Authorities released video Wednesday of a chase involving a suspected murderer who chose to jump off a bridge into the Mississippi River instead of being arrested.

Investigators assume Kylan Laurent, 22, of Vacherie is dead following the leap, but are keeping up the search just in case the killer is still on the run.

Laurent led police on a chase through Vacherie, along LA 18 in St. James Parish, Tuesday afternoon.

The chase ended with Laurent diving 165 feet into the Mississippi River from the Veterans Memorial Bridge on LA 3213 in Gramercy.

The pursuit and the jump were caught on the dashboard cameras in Louisiana State Police units.

The incident began just before 1 p.m. Laurent was heading south on LA 18 from Vacherie, when he made a u-turn on LA 3213 near the Wallace community.

Laurent's 2005 Chevrolet Impala stopped at the top of the bridge, where he got out of the car and went over the wall into the river.
Agencies from Baton Rouge to New Orleans are still searching for Laurent or his body, in order to wrap up this case.

Laurent is accused in the murders of two women in the New Orleans area and the severe beatings of several other women, including at least one in Baton Rouge.

Police searched Laurent's home Tuesday night for clues. They went back Wednesday to gather more evidence.

Reportedly, troopers began tracking Laurent when they got a call from the Baton Rouge Police Department on Tuesday requesting they move in and pick him up.

Related Stories

- Search continues for murder suspect who jumped off bridge
- Murder suspect jumps from bridge

Two police officers and fireman win bravery awards

Two police officers and a firefighter are to receive awards for their daring rescue of a man and his son in a tragic incident which shocked the nation. Christopher Grady, who was later given a life sentence for murdering his daughter and attempting to kill his son, took his children against their mother’s wishes and drove straight into the icy river Avon at Evesham.

He and son Ryan survived but daughter Gabby, aged five, later died in hospital after being submerged in the car for two hours. By the time police arrived, the car was sinking in the 12ft deep water about ten yards from the bank.

Grady, who had been evicted from his Evesham flat days earlier, and Ryan then emerged and police unsuccessfullly tried to persuade Grady to help himself and his son.

It was at this stage Inspector Sean Kent, Sergeant Phil Stayte and Jason Mayhew of Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue service mounted their rescue bid and saved father and son. Now Insp Kent has been awarded a Royal Humane Society testimonial on vellum and Sgt Stayte and Mr Mayhew have each been awarded testimonials on parchment.
The trio also won the praise of Dick Wilkinson, society secretary for their action during the horror incident on 11 February last year. He said: “This was a truly horrific incident which resulted in the death of one child. These three rescuers did all they could to save all three.”

Describing what happened Mr Wilkinson said: “A line was thrown to the father but he failed to take any action. His son then went under the water and Insp Kent, who could not reach him from a nearby wooden platform, took off his jacket and went in. He swam about 15 metres through icy, murky and fast-moving water to reach the boy and grabbed him. He then managed to get him back to the safety of the bank where Sgt Stayte was waiting to pull him out of the water.

“Mr Mayhew then arrived and went into the water wearing a dry-suit, dived to the car and attempted to smash a window to rescue the daughter. In the end he suffered the effects of the water.

“Nevertheless he went back again and tried to attach a hook to the car but it has shifted as a result of the increasing current and was too dangerous to work on.

Two police divers who had been working nearby then arrived and were able to recover the girl who was flown to hospital but died a few days later. The father was also helped out of the water in the end.

“The rescuers were faced with a horrific and ultimately tragic scenario.” The awards will be presented on a date to be fixed.

**Police recover suspected weapon in Ala. Killings**


_August 27, 2011_

DECATUR, Ala. (AP) — Police say they have recovered a weapon that may have been used to kill two workers at a Decatur restaurant.

Decatur police say divers on Saturday found a 9 mm handgun in the northwest corner of Wilson Morgan Lake. The weapon will be sent to the Alabama Department of Forensic Science for additional testing.

Investigators arrested employee Jordaan Stanly Creque of Hartselle on Wednesday and charged him with capital murder in the slayings of two fellow employees at a Krystal store during an early morning robbery. Police later charged two more employees in connection with the robbery and killings.
County mourns loss of deputy Gross who tried to save young girl in Platte

http://www.douglas-budget.com/glenrock/news/article_9c2253c6-be18-11e0-bec8-001cc4c03286.html
August 25, 2011 . Adam Herrera Reporter/Photographer

Glenrock and all of Converse County is still reeling from the shock of losing one of their own. Deputy Bryan Gross, 29, drowned in the North Platte River July 28 while trying to rescue a young girl.

With a memorial service planned for 11 a.m. Saturday in the Douglas High School gym, many in law enforcement from the Glenrock area – as well as numerous citizens, family and friends of the family – are expected to attend. The Deer Creek Days Parade has been rescheduled to 12:30 p.m. Saturday so mourners may attend the service.

The loss impacts the Glenrock community especially hard. Deputy Gross’ mother, Cindy Allen, and grandmother, Patricia Allen, are Glenrock residents. Deputy Gross, whose birthday was Friday, July 29, was married July 1 to Amy Spruiell. He also owned rental property in Glenrock.

According to Undersheriff Don Schoenleber, Deputy Gross entered the river at the west bank near Pearson Street in Douglas, just south of the Yellowstone Highway Bridge, at approximately 5 p.m. to assist an as yet-unidentified civilian who was already in the water attempting to rescue the 14-year-old minor.

According to eye-witnesses, an unidentified civilian who had been assisting the girl in the river quickly became tired from holding her above water in the fast-flowing current and was forced to return to shore. Teams of emergency responders began arriving at the scene to assist in the rescue. CCSO deputies, Douglas Police officers, the Douglas Volunteer Fire Department and Emergency Medical Teams converged on the river as other civilians were attempting to help the girl.

Douglas firefighters responded to the Richards Street Bridge, approximately a mile downstream of where the girl went into the water, and began stringing a rope across the river from shore to the top of the bridge in an attempt to snag the girl as she floated by.

At the same moment, two other citizens became involved in the rescue, running along the east side of the river bank with a rope, hoping to reach the girl and pull her to safety.

“We were working at the fairgrounds,” said Keith Thompson, 19. “We saw there was a girl in the river, and we asked the police if there was anything we could do to help and they said keep an eye on her.” Thompson was joined by Lane Morgan, 16, of Douglas who had the same reaction – help the girl. “I wasn’t thinking,” Morgan said.
“When stuff happens, you don’t have time to think.”

Morgan was thrown a rope, and the pair began racing down the bank after the girl.

“We jumped over this fence, and I was kind of ahead of (Lane) so he threw me the rope and we just kept running down the bank farther and farther until I got to Mr. (Randy) Cox’s house, and I started to wade into the water, getting ready to throw her the rope and I lost my footing and slipped. So I just started swimming toward her.”

Before Thompson could reach her, the young girl grabbed onto the firemen’s rope that had been strung across the river. But due to the strong current she was pulled underwater immediately after grabbing the rope. Finally, she was forced to let go and continued floating downstream. By this time, the girl had been in the icy, mountain snow-fed water for nearly 20 minutes. According to Converse County Emergency Management Director Russ Dalgarn, the river was flowing at about 7,500 cfs, a record for this time of year.

As she passed under the Richards Street Bridge, Thompson had another opportunity to throw her the rope.

“I saw her coming down and no one else was around her so I started swimming out to her and threw her a little bit of rope and then started swimming back toward shore,” Thompson said.

At that point, some residents helped the pair back onto shore. Following the rescue, the young woman was treated on the shore by EMTs and taken to Memorial Hospital of Converse County.

Upon a personnel check with those involved in the rescue, some concern was raised after Deputy Gross failed to report in and a search was started to locate him about 45 minutes after the girl first went into the water.

Search and rescue teams were mobilized in cooperation with the Sheriff’s Office. They included search and rescue volunteers, DPD, DVFD, swiftwater divers, Wyoming Game and Fish, Wyoming Highway Patrol, members of the Wyoming National...
Guard, as well as civil air support from private pilots. His boots, duty belt, vest and shirt were found under a tree near the bike path a short distance from his vehicle on Pearson Street.

Rescue teams walked the entire length of the river on both sides from Douglas to Orin Junction in search of the missing deputy. ATVs, personal watercraft, boats, planes, and a Blackhawk helicopter from Francis E. Warren Air Force Base in Cheyenne were used to comb the river banks.

Even his trusty partner Gus, a Sheriff’s Office K-9 unit who lived with Deputy Gross full time, was brought in to help locate his missing partner.

“Gus did alert to the same areas the other dogs did during the search,” said Converse County Sheriff Clint Becker.

Deputy Gross’ body was found downstream between the I-25 overpass and the Anderson Dairy Bridge, about 1.5 miles from where he was believed to have entered the water.

The Natrona County Sheriff’s Office will conduct an investigation of the incident in an effort to provide a full accounting of what happened.

“He has left behind a legacy as someone who was pretty honorable in the way he did his job,” Becker said. “He was doing the best job that he could and above and beyond. I think that there are a lot of officers that are doing that everyday, and I hope that the people of Wyoming understand that this is something that we do everyday. So, as far as Bryan is concerned, he tried to do a hard task and did it selflessly.

“The community has been wonderful. Converse County, Douglas, Glenrock, and all the surrounding counties, the state, everyone has been absolutely incredible,” he continued. “We had a gentleman donate his boat. He wasn’t even in the state. He said, ‘I have this special boat that works on the river, go into my garage and use it.’ And it was very instrumental in helping us. He said, ‘I have a plane in my garage, go use it.’ So that’s just the type of community we have.”

Becker said a number of local businesses were instrumental in bringing food and water to emergency crews to keep them fed and hydrated. Hoenleber said the hot weather and icy waters had also been a factor and each member of the rescue team had been given vital checks to check for hypothermia and heat exhaustion by EMT units as they came off of their shifts.
Despite this loss, it is clear now that Gross made a memorable impact on the community that he served, often donating hours of his time to the Boys & Girls Club of Douglas and to the men and women he encountered through the Sheriff’s Office.

“He was one of the best people I have ever met,” said a tearful Johnathan Helms of Glenrock. “He arrested me, that was how I first met him. (Later,) I went to jail for other reasons and he was always checking up on me to make sure I was okay. And he would check in on my fiance, too, to make sure she was doing alright. That was just the kind of person he was. He was one of the few who actually cared.”

On page A-8 is a tribute to Deputy Gross, written by myriad people and posted on a newspaper website and facebook page.

Donations are being accepted on behalf of the family by Converse County Bank and the Sheriff’s Office. Donations to Search and Rescue can also be made at Converse County Bank.

N.J. trooper saves life, loses 1 in same call

TRENTON, N.J. (AP) – On most nights, New Jersey State Trooper Daniel Cunning would feel good about saving someone’s life.

But this night wasn’t like other nights, as a hurricane made landfall in New Jersey for only the third time in two centuries.

With ferocious winds and stinging rain, Cunning would save a life and lose a life in the darkness on the same flooded road, marking Hurricane Irene’s first reported death and a dramatic rescue in the state.

"He did a very heroic thing," said State Police spokesman Stephen Jones. "And he still doesn't feel good about it."

Celena Sylvestri, 20, from Quinton was
driving along Route 40 just before 1 a.m. Sunday. The small stream that ran along the road in Pilesgrove had swollen so large that by the time she reached the Kings Highway crossroad, police said, she had driven into it.

First she called her boyfriend then used her mobile phone to call 911. She told police the water inside her Honda Accord was up to her neck.

Cunning was one of three troopers and a fire truck crew to rush to the scene, which was just down the road on Route 40.

"The conditions were horrendous, visibility was almost zero," he recalled. "I could see 150 yards of water rushing across the road."

He looked around frantically. Nothing. So he went down to the next crossroad, hoping he might catch her downstream.

"Maybe I'll get lucky and she'll pop up," he thought. "I was looking for a person, or vehicle, or anything at that point."

He saw nothing.

On the other side of Route 40, 68-year-old James Troy was about to make the same mistake as Sylvestri as he drove into the rushing water. His truck quickly washed down into woods, which by then had become a river, and he washed out of the truck.

As Cunning looked for the young woman, the report came in about a man in the water, who by then was clinging to a tree. Cunning, a former lifeguard, ran back to the fire truck, tied a 70-foot rope to his waist, and began wading into the water. Soon, he was up to his waist.

"I thought it was going to knock me down," the 6-foot-3 trooper said.

He called out, and he heard an answer.

Once they spotted Troy, Cunning said they tried to throw him a life preserver. It didn't work. So the fire truck drove farther into the water, with Cunning still attached, and the former lifeguard swam to rescue Troy.

After bringing the older man to dry pavement, Cunning went back in to look for the young woman; the rope was still tied to his waist and firetruck.

"They let me swim down river the length of the rope, but I couldn't see anything. Then," he said with a sigh, "they called to me and said that I was literally at the end of my rope."

At dawn, a swift-water rescue diver was brought in and located Sylvestri's car, submerged below four feet of water. Her body was recovered and by the afternoon, the
water had receded back enough that a tow truck could reach it.

"There was no way they could ever see that car," Jones said. "But it wasn't because they didn't try."

FOUND ON THE WEB
Recovering the fallen
August 22, 2011 SUE HICKEY

"To die completely, a person must not only forget, but be forgotten, and he who is not forgotten, is not dead."

Well said by English novelist Samuel Butler, and it's a quote often used in eulogies, obituaries and in memoriams.

It would also be appropriate, however, for one of the creeds of the U.S. military - "no one left behind."

Hundreds of thousands of U.S. soldiers have died or gone missing in action in this century and the past, from the great world wars and smaller conflicts like the Korean and Vietmanese wars. In more recent times, some soldiers have been the victims of war, such as Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq.

When Americans enlist, they are told of that promise: none left behind.

That promise is manifesting now, in the recovery efforts a U.S. diving team is acting on now in Botwood. They're searching for remains from the victims of military personnel on board the Excalibur, the flying boat that old-time Botwood residents remember crashing in the Bay of Exploits.

When one contemplates the majesty of their task, it's an eerily beautiful form of duty. It is true ritual that doesn't try to minimize death, to make it an empty routine where the dead "pass away" because in Western countries, people don't want to talk about the last mystery of crossing the void.

Shakespeare's Hamlet called it the "undiscovered country, from whose bourne no traveler returns." The divers of the U.S. Navy are hoping to find "souvenirs" of those victims' journey to that country, even something as small as a finger or toe bone, perhaps a tooth, or a larger specimen.

Is there any purpose, however, some have asked in trying to recover such things? Or the spending of the
money on something like a repatriation or recovery effect worth it for the sake of the nebulous term "closure?"

If you answer "no, it is just foolishness," you're the one that's wrong. In your accusation, you have run down all who have died, all who celebrate funerals and perhaps even yourself when your friends and family gather to sing your requiem.

There is nothing more annoying than someone who says "I don't do wakes" or "don't go to funerals."

Repatriation has been in the news lately. This past week, remains of some Inuit were finally laid to rest in the Torngat Mountains, where the remains originally came from as part of a university research project.

There's no more appropriate setting than this national park, named after the powerful mountain spirits of Inuit myth. Another emotional ceremony of repatriation in June involved the return of 22 Inuit taken from marked graves more than 80 years ago during a ceremony at the former Moravian mission site at Zoar, south of Nain. The remains were removed from their original graves by anthropologist William Duncan Strong of Chicago's Field Museum of Natural History during the Rawson-MacMillan Sub-Arctic Expedition of 1927-1928. He apparently knew it was wrong, and he and the museum tried to cover it up.

Even the fragments of the dead, no matter what group they belong to, have a spiritual power treasured and honoured in the ancient and modern worlds. They are the reminders of what they are now, and what we will become. John McCrae recognized this truth in his immortal war lyric: "We are the Dead. Short days ago. We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow, Loved and were loved, and now we lie, In Flanders Fields."
So it is in Botwood. The U.S. Military also recognizes the importance of bringing the remains of their soldiers home, and the significance of closure for the living.

All of these soldiers were promised they would not be left behind when they joined.

The Botwood recovery shows the power of ritual to honour, to bind together, and to celebrate. As Gilbert Chesterton wrote, there may a time when all are reunited in that undiscovered country someday: "For you and me, and all brave men my brother ...there is good wine poured in the inn at the end of the world."

**FOUND ON THE WEB**

**Mock Disaster on Detroit River Tests Response Times**

http://www.emsworld.com/web/online/Top-EMS-News/Mock-Disaster-on-Detroit-River-Tests-Response-Times/1$18053

August 24, 2011

Aug. 24--Made up to look like a disaster victim, with a shard of glass sticking out of the bloody wound in his forehead, Eric Tuchelske was told to play dead after a blast rocked the Detroit Princess riverboat. Tuchelske lay on the shore as passing stretchers and busy emergency personnel carrying other mock victims clipped him. "One of the EMS people said, 'Hey, you're hitting him in the head!' " said Tuchelske, 48, of Dearborn Heights, who was volunteering to help a friend who works with the American Red Cross. "So, for about an hour or so, I laid on the dock. It was a nice little nap -- kind of."

The mock disaster was the result of three years of planning and was designed to test emergency response times during a large-scale emergency. In all, about 500 people from more than 65 U.S. and Canadian federal, state and local emergency response agencies took part in "Detroit River Readiness 2011," stretching from Trenton to downtown Detroit, according to the U.S. Coast Guard.

After a blast from the riverboat just after 9 a.m. echoed between the Renaissance Center and the Windsor shore, dozens of Detroit firefighters, Windsor police, U.S. Coast Guard officers and Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents boarded tugs, speedboats and ice cutters.
Speeding off into the sparkling blue water, they then rescued 75 people -- actually floating orange Coast Guard suits -- from the water.

U.S. Coast Guard Operations Specialist James Badgett juggled requests and commands from two cell phones and six handheld radios to help the event unfold smoothly, as he would do if it were the real thing. "We go through the growing pains of practice so that way, when we actually need it for a large-scale exercise, we're ready to go," he said.

Inspector George Lepine of Transport Canada, the federal agency responsible for marine, aviation and railway security in Canada, was pleased as he stood on the Detroit side of the river. "I think our response process in this area is excellent because we have so much resources," Lepine said. "Both on the Canadian side and the U.S. side, there's a large deployment of resources here on a daily basis, so we're covered very well."

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**FOUND ON THE WEB**

**Reverse Block and Scuba Diving**

How Should You React If You Have a Reverse Block When Scuba Diving?

http://scuba.about.com/od/divemedicinesafety/a/Reverse-Block-And-Scuba-Diving.htm?

By Natalie Gibb, About.com Guide

I had enjoyed an almost stress-free first dive with an open water course student when he suddenly flashed me the dreaded "not okay" sign during the ascent. Divers are trained to communicate a problem by signaling their dive buddy or guide with a flat hand turned side to side (like a so-so gesture). The most common situation in which I see a diver make this hand signal is in the case of ear equalization problems, and this was the case with my student. Before I could stop him, he pinched his nose shut and blew out his nose, as if he were equalizing his ears during a descent. Depending upon the reason for ear discomfort on ascent, this may be the worst thing that a diver can do.

Why would a diver's ears hurt as he ascends? There are two obvious reasons. The first is common with new, inexperienced divers who have not completely mastered their ascent techniques. Although the diver is attempting to ascend, he loses track of his depth and inadvertently descends without equalizing his ears. The second possibility is that the diver is experiencing a reverse block.
As an instructor, it is sometimes difficult to ascertain the reason for ear discomfort on ascent. An informed diver, however, can usually determine what is happening in his own body better than a dive guide can.

**Ear Pain From Accidental Descent**

As a diver ascends, the water pressure decreases causing the air trapped in his ears to expand according to Boyle’s Law. Normally, the expanding air escapes from a diver's ears without the diver manually equalizing them - the diver's ears automatically equalize to the lower pressure. If the diver descends again, he will need to re-equalize his ears to compensate for increased pressure just as he did on the original descent. Otherwise he will feel discomfort in his ears.

Once a diver understands that his ears need to be equalized *each time* he descends, he can learn to recognize how his ears feel with a slight increase of water pressure. This allows a diver to use his ears as a gauge to alert him if he begins to inadvertently descend while attempting to swim up. Other ways a diver can avoid an accidental descent is by vigilantly monitoring his depth gauge during his ascent and by using an ascent line as a visual depth reference.

**Ear Pain From a Reverse Block**

The other possible cause of pain on ascent is a reverse block. A reverse block occurs when air that is expanding due to the decrease of water pressure on ascent is trapped in a diver's ears. As this air expands, it exerts pressure and can mimic the pain of a skipped equalization during descent. However, the problem is the exact opposite. The pain of a reverse block on ascent is caused by *too much* air in the ears rather than too little. Most divers instinctively attempt a standard equalization by pinching their noses and blowing the moment they feel discomfort in their ears. In the case of a reverse block, this is the worst thing a diver can do, because it adds air to the already over-full ears and exacerbates the problem.

In the case of a reverse block, a diver must descend to a depth where he experiences no pain in his ears, and then slowly ascend, allowing time for the trapped air in his over-full ears to escape. This can take minutes or longer, or sometimes not occur at all. In a worst case scenario, a diver with reverse block will eventually have to ascend as his air supply runs to zero, risking an ear barotrauma.

Reverse blocks are most common when sick divers ignore safe diving guidelines and use decongestants or other medicines to aid in equalization on descents. Underwater, drugs are metabolized more quickly than normal because of the high water pressure. A diver who uses medicine to equalize on descent may find that the medicine has worn off and is no longer effective at the end of the dive.
Without the drugs to help his ears equalize as he ascends, the expanding air becomes trapped in the ears and causes pain.

How does a diver tell if he has a reverse block or has simply descended when he intended to ascend? The answer is tricky. The best thing a diver can do to avoid ear problems on ascent is to only dive when he is healthy and refrain from using drugs to help with equalization. Furthermore, a new diver should concentrate on learning proper buoyancy and ascent procedures such as monitoring his depth gauge on ascent. In a worst case scenario, a diver can either ascend or descend slightly and see which direction helps to relieve the pain. If ascending relieves the pain, he has simply descended inadvertently and should re-equalize his ears and continue his ascent, but if ascending increases the pain it is likely that he has a reverse block and must avoid adding more air to his ears and allow time for the air to work its way out. Learning to recognize the difference between an omitted equalization and a reverse block will keep divers comfortable and safe during an ascent.

**INTERNET DISCUSSION GROUPS OF INTEREST**

- [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/PSDivers-PublicSafetyDiversForum/?yguid=7499348](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/PSDivers-PublicSafetyDiversForum/?yguid=7499348)
- [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SAR-Diver/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SAR-Diver/)
- [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sideimaging/?yguid=7499348](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sideimaging/?yguid=7499348)

Kidney Problems

Kidney Problems and Diving

Diving and the physical changes that take place with the underwater environment have little to relate to the urological system. There is very little in the way of articles and reports concerning the urological system and sport diving. However, there are some factors that must be taken into consideration by the diver and his doctor when deciding if a person with conditions of the urinary tract should dive. The entire urologic complex of the kidneys, ureters, bladder, prostate and urethra have to be considered -- not just the kidneys alone.

The examination of prospective divers, sports scuba divers, underwater photographers and diving instructors with kidney disease should include the pertinent aspects of present and past history, review of systems and physical examination directed and designed to specifically...
detect those conditions that place a person in jeopardy for the following:

1). decompression illness
2). pulmonary over pressure accidents
3). loss of consciousness
4). inability to mentally or physically handle the in-water environment.

- Post-surgical or post-debilitating illness
- Diabetes
- Asthma
- Age Related
- Mental obtundation
- Air containing reconstructions or prostheses

The obvious reasons why a person should not dive are as follows:

- Disorders that lead to altered consciousness
- Disorders that inhibit the "natural evolution of Boyle's Law"
- Disorders that may lead to erratic and irresponsible behavior.

**Basic Urological Anatomy and Physiology**

- Disorders of the urinary outlet of the kidney, such as obstructions of the ureter or stones, but also benign or malignant tumors and inborn diseases.

Diving with Renal Failure

When the kidneys are damaged by some systemic disease process (such as diabetes, arteriosclerosis, heavy metal poisoning or drugs) it's ability to function as a filter is diminished and products of metabolism such as urea nitrogen and creatinine are not removed from the blood. This leads to blunting of the sensorium, loss of cognition and decrease in underwater skills. The extent to which this occurs varies greatly with the individual and a critical level of 'BUN' and creatinine (azotemia) causing mental and cerebral changes dangerous to a diver cannot be stated with accuracy. Individuals can continue to function with remarkably high levels of creatinine, having some degree of accommodation. These people also have significant fluid and electrolyte shifts, blood pressure problems and renal insufficiency to the point of requiring dialysis (peritoneal or AV shunt). Significant anemia
Case Question:
Dear colleague: did you ever hear from any active divers suffering from complete renal insufficiency - dialysis dependent? We have decided to let him not dive furthermore because of his massive imbalance in his sodium and potassium- results. Very careful immersion in a swimming pool leads to a rise in blood pressure (170/95 at surface, 200/105 immersed). Do you know any literature dealing with this very special question?

Answer:
"Unless there is some abrogation of Boyle’s Law, there should be no contraindication to diving with peritoneal dialysis. If there are any air containing spaces in the abdomen or tubal appliances, your patient might have some problem with the volume changes that take place upon ascent while diving on compressed air" Your patient probably should not dive anyway, with a pressure such as you describe. This is very interesting and I’d be interested in whether or not the immersion had any effects on his hyperkalemia.

Kidney Transplant

Transplant patients would be at little risk of sport diving given good recovery from the surgery and no evidence of organ rejection. However, there are risks for diving in the marine environment while taking immunosuppressants (see Marine Infections and Diving in Polluted Water). In addition to increased risk of infection by organisms not ordinarily pathogens, there is also the effect the drug protocols have on the bone marrow (anemia) and on blood clotting (hemorrhage from barotrauma of the ears, sinuses and lungs). It is thought by some that spinal decompression illness is worsened by hemorrhage from a clotting deficit.

There is also the possibility of pulmonary fibrosis from the immunosuppressing drugs. The dangers from pulmonary fibrosis would be the increased risk of hypoxia with low oxygen transfer and the increased risk of pulmonary barotrauma from blockage of the terminal airways. (air trapping).

Fitness to Dive?

It is thought that if there has been a sufficient period of time after the transplant to assess the function of the kidney as concerns the renal and cardiovascular system (blood pressure, pulmonary function) - usually about one year - and if a person has no adverse drug reactions - that a person can return to diving, considering the discussion above.

Kidney Donor Diving?

Given complete recovery from any surgery required for the donation, there would be no reason for the donor not to dive.
**Polycystic Kidney Disease**

In this condition there are innumerable fluid-filled cysts in the kidneys. Early on this offers little or no risk due to diving since there is no abrogation of Boyle's law. However, the condition would be dangerous from other aspects due to the possibility of anemia, azotemia and infection. The cysts of this disease are fluid-filled and therefore would not be subject to the effects of pressure/volume changes. In later stages of the condition problems of alertness and changes in sensorium due to azotemia would be important to take into consideration. There is also the problem of possible anemia with low oxygen carrying potential.

**Renal stones, kidney infections**

A diver with renal stones or infection poses a problem as to the differential diagnosis of renal colic and pain from infection and the symptoms of decompression sickness.

Stones and stents for drainage of urine are not affected by depth/pressure and should not in themselves be a reason not to dive. However, medications taken to relieve pain and spasms and to prevent reflux (such as Detrol) can have side effects that in theory could pose problems for the diver. Drowsiness, from any cause can be additive to the ever present effects of nitrogen narcosis. Detrol also can interact with other medications such as some antibiotics.

The diver should carefully document symptoms prior to your dives and observe and note any changes during and after the dive. Advise your divemaster and your buddy of your symptoms so that you will have a disinterested observer. The problems that would be encountered by the commercial diver in a saturation situation with renal colic would be considerable. The sport diver at remote dive sites is also placed in jeopardy.

**Bladder Problems**

Bladder drainage systems (catheters) have bulbs or balloons that require inflating in order to secure them in place. A diver with one of these should ensure that the bulb does not contain air but it should be inflated with water or saline.

Frequency of urination, as is often seen in men with prostate enlargement and women with bladder problems related to childbirth, should not be a significant problem with the diver. 'Peeing' in the wet suit is not a forbidden or unforgiveable act and is not harmful.

**Prostate Problems**

Other than the symptoms of dysuria, frequency of urination and urgency that make this condition so unpleasant there are few caveats concerning diving. However, the medications used to treat this condition can cause considerable difficulty.
One of the prominent non-surgical therapies for an enlarged prostate is a group of drugs called alpha blockers, an old blood pressure medication. Two tradenames are 'Hytrin' and 'Flomax'. They are quite effective in relieving symptoms but have a major side effect - they cause significant nasal mucosal congestion and can be a cause of extreme difficulty in equalizing while scuba diving.

Another side effect is hypotension; what effect the changes that take place in immersion would have on the diver on this medication would need careful titration and observation for the first few dives.

**Diving after urinary tract surgery**
- Should await clearance by the operating surgeon
- Post op wait depends on the type and extent of surgery done
- Surgical incisions should be completely healed without infection, drainage or herniation
- Ostomies and appliances should contain no air that cannot be vented
- All medications should be carefully evaluated for symptoms dangerous in the underwater environment
- All postoperative anemia should be corrected

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If you want to share a thought or comment, send an email to PSDiverMonthly@aol.com.

**Subject Line – Letter To The Editor**

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Surface and Dive Operations in Contaminated Water
For the past several months planning has been underway to present a symposium in the fall of 2011 on the topic of surface and sub-surface operations by rescue and enforcement personnel in the contaminated water and ice environment. This is a joint presentation by the Ottawa Fire Service, the Ottawa Police Service and the Ottawa Paramedic Service. The Organizing Committee is grateful for the very generous support of our corporate sponsors, as well as the invaluable support offered by the OPPFA and OFS Special Operations.

The Symposium is being held October 13th and 14th at the Holiday Inn and Suites Kanata (Ottawa, ON, Canada). Registrations are being accepted online at www.ncsos2011.ca. Seating is limited so you are encouraged to respond early to reserve your space. Please visit the website for more information. A very dynamic and informative selection of presenters will be on hand to discuss all aspects of contaminated water operations.

Mr. Steve Barsky, an internationally recognized contaminated water dive expert, brings with him over 25 years of experience. Steve will present attendees with new
and innovative approaches to dealing with contaminated diving and surface operations and be available to discuss equipment maintenance and repair issues. Mr. Bob McKee, Chief of Texas Task Force 1, will discuss the role of first responders to large scale events, with particular emphasis on exposure to contaminated waters in flood and moving water environments. Specific equipment and tactical considerations for the first responder as well as training, safety and logistical issues will be covered.

This symposium will provide a unique opportunity to share this information with our partners as we learn additional material from these nationally and internationally recognized subject matter experts. In addition to these well known experts, special guests will discuss a wide range of related topics such as infectious diseases, technical decontamination requirements, contaminated water sampling, specialized equipment, deployment considerations, spills and boom deployment, small vessel compliance and operating issues, communication (unified command) issues and training and safety related concerns.

A significant body of work has been assimilated from many sources including FDNY, EPA, NOAA, US Navy, US Coast Guard, the Canadian Coast Guard and DND. Additionally, the NFPA has developed NFPA 1952, Standard on Surface Water Operations Protective Clothing and Equipment, which outlines the surface rescuers complete ensemble to mitigate the effects of exposure while conducting operations.

Come join us in October for an interesting and informative opportunity to learn more and discuss these issues with fellow firefighters from across the country. Seating is limited so book now to avoid disappointment.
2011 International Public Safety Diver Conference
September 19-23, 2011 Ft. Lauderdale, FL


International Trauma Conference
October 25-28, 2011
Nashville, Tennessee

Sheraton Myrtle Beach Convention Center
Myrtle Beach, South Carolina
October 31- November 1, 2011
http://www.techno-forensics.com/

Global Security Workshop - November 11-19, 2011 - Tel Aviv, Israel

SWAT Counter Terrorism Operations - November 15-18, 2011 - Yakima, WA

If you have an event to share, send the information to: PSDiverMonthly@aol.com

PSDiver Monthly Issue 87 35

Continuing Education
PSDM-CE-87

Free Online Training:
Epilepsy and Seizure Response for Law Enforcement and EMS -
https://www.centrelearn.com/login_epilepsyfoundation.asp

1) OSH 29 CFR 1910.120 Subpart “T” only applies to commercial divers hired for a job.
   a. True
   b. False

2) A diver suffering from a Reverse” blockage should immediately ascend and ask for oxygen.
   a. True
   b. False

3) As a diver ascends in the water column the surrounding air pressure ________.
   a. Increases
   b. Remains constant
   c. Decreases
   d. Changes every 10 feet

4) A person who donates a kidney should not dive due to only having one kidney
   a. True
   b. False
5) Diver should await clearance by their physician after any urinary tract surgery.
   a. True
   b. False

6) Never drive a vehicle in water that is deeper than _____________
   a. 2 – 4 inches
   b. 4 – 6 inches
   c. 6 – 8 inches
   d. Never drive in water deeper than that in which you can’t see the bottom
   e. Never drive into swift moving water
   f. E & F

7) Divers should be trained in the tools necessary to perform a particular task.
   a. True
   b. False

8) Top Water Rescue is not a type of rescue a dive team should be called on to perform.
   a. True
   b. False

9) Medications can be taken to mitigate sinus blockage while diving but can pose a great risk to the diver.
   a. True
   b. False

10) The OSHA exemption applies only to public safety divers, and does not apply to police divers.
   a. True
   b. False

11) Dysuria symptoms exist because of problems with the
    a. Bladder
    b. Prostate
    c. Bladder
    d. Urethra

12) It is ok to urinate in your wet suit underwater.
    a. True
    b. False

Team Discussion:

1. As a team, discuss your top water rescue capabilities, procedures and action plans. If they are more than 6 months old, consider holding a top water rescue only class.

2. Discuss with your team the need for a defined physical exam and specified time frame

3. Review with your team “OSH” documentation and how it may or may not apply to your operations.

4. Review your team OSH rules outside of the CFR 1910.120 and how it may affect your operation, such as confined space or HAZMAT.

5. Review your team’s safety procedure with respect to diver and support safety.
These training agencies have recognized PSDiver Monthly as a valued addition to their programs and Continuing Education requirements.

**Public Safety Diving Association (PSDA)** recognizes and approves the PSDiver CE program. Each month’s Q&A program credits 1 CEU for renewal up to a maximum of 3 CEUs from this source for each year’s renewal.

**ERDI** Recognizes and supports the PSDiver Monthly CE Program. Contact your ERDI Instructor for details.

**Lifesaving Resources**
Lifesaving Resources advocates the need for Public Safety and Rescue personnel to be trained in Water and Ice Rescue and recognizes the PSDiver Monthly CE Program for continuing education training and credits.

**Lifeguard Systems – TEAM LGS**
We welcome all training agencies and organizations to participate. For details, email mailto:PSDiverMonthly@aol.com

**PSDM 87 CE Answers**

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**IMPORTANT NUMBERS:**

- **Chemical spill information** can be obtained by calling 1-800-424-9300.
- **Dive Alert Network (DAN) 24-hour emergency hotline** 1-919-684-9111 to help divers in need of ANY medical emergency assistance.