

Tolland County Dive Team – February 7, 2008 Meeting

Meeting called to order at 18:45 at TN.

In Attendance: RD19, 119, 219, 519, 619, 819, 919, M Dittrich, and T Sullivan

Drills: January – pool drill was another success. A number of divers were able to test out new equipment, balance their weight, and run through some skills stations.

February – is Sunday 2/10 in Ashford Ice dive – Meeting 8AM at Station 20

March – is Sunday 3/9 in Crystal Lake Ice Dive

April – TBD, possibly doing a second class day for swift water rescue training

May – Camp Aya-po in Somers (Night Dive)

June – Patriots Park in Coventry (Sunday / annual picnic)

The new meeting format seems to be working out well so far. We will continue to have meetings the first Thursday of the month when we are drilling on Sunday's. Meetings will not normally be scheduled for those months that we are having night drills. Going forward we will be holding our meetings at Tolland's Training center as opposed to TN for parking and ease of access.

Service 119 had a wiring melt down. It appears that it was accidentally left plugged in while the vehicle was running – most likely during a routine check. Norm spent several hours rewiring a lot of the emergency lights. Everything is now working except for the grill strobes. This last issue may be a problem with the actual power pack. We are working on it.

Mark and Norm have information on a new pony bottle holder that they report is working out real well during testing. If you are considering buying a new one for yourself or your department, contact RD-119 or Mark and he can get you information on the bracket and best pricing.

The Crystal Lake Fire Department is supporting a "Penguin Plunge" at Crystal Lake on Sunday March 2nd. This will be from 10 AM to 1:30 PM. This is a publicity and fundraising event for CT Special Olympics. They have asked if our dive team could stand by. We will be sending S-119 and could use extra volunteers. If available please contact John Strieber.

- They should have a good turnout from the public, as well as the press.
- Plans are for teams of people to go jump in, swim for a minute and then swap out. Our job is to just stand by and make sure everyone gets out ok.

- John Streiber is also going to be signing up to jump in. If we have enough interest we can form our own team, or we have also been invited to join the CREST's group for this event.

The CREST dive team (police based in the Greater Hartford area), will be holding a training drill for their team on February 26th in Coventry. They have invited any of our members that are interested to attend and dive with them. Since we have joint coverage in several towns including South Windsor, Manchester, and East Hartford, this is a great opportunity to get to know the other team members and how they operate.

We will be ordering some new float markers. They are similar to a pelican float, but are H-Shaped so they will not drift and unspool all its line in a current.

Line signals. Again we now have a standardize set of line signals. We have made up a bunch of cards, please contact RD-19 or 619 if you need more. A good idea is to give one to every diver, and to attach one to every rope bag.

Minutes to these meetings are now posted on the website.

Norm will be putting on a boating safety class for FD personnel. These classes will be on March 18th and 25th, from 6:30 to 9:30, and will also have one weekend class for actual boat operations. Classes will be held at Station 107.

We are in the process of getting budget pricing information for more full face masks, and possibly a second MK-7 Comm. box. By handing masks out to our most active divers, the system is getting a lot more use.

Discussion came up regarding this team's response to swift water calls. In recent years we have been called to help at the drowning in Chaplin, the Peapod truck stuck in a Coventry river, and the three boys in a river in Vernon. In one instance (Chaplin) our lack of training and experience in this area contributed to one of our members getting hurt. In reality, we are not currently equipped or trained to do this type of rescue. However, when we look around the county, we are the only water rescue resource. Chances are we are going to be called to the scene to assist.

- Dive commanders will discuss this issue with the County Coordinators, to clarify our current abilities, and to see if we should take a more active role in training and equipping ourselves for these types of incidents.
- If the county decides this is a service we should be providing, than we will need to revisit our equipment and training to make sure we can properly meet this request.
- We have made contact with a swift water training company called Zoor Outdoor and they said they will assist us if we request it. We also now have

some experienced members with the Columbia Fire Dept that may be able to provide us with some guidance.

2008 Participation agreements were sent out to the chiefs. So far I have gotten them back from Stations:

7, 8, 9, 11, 15, 20, 40, 42, 44, 46, and 543

If your department is not listed, please contact your chief and have these submitted as soon as possible.

-JR