

Wednesday evening after work on August 5, 2009, Cindy LaRosa and Kevin Magee traveled to Cleveland's Flats to go diving. The trip was one of Aqua Specialist's midweek one-tank evening dives, which are held every two weeks throughout the summer. A total of 12 divers and 2 bubble watchers met next to the Cuyahoga River at Collision Bend near Terminal Tower. This is where Capt. Wayne Bratton keeps his 60' steel charter boat "Holiday." The divers included John Norris, Rich Schmidt, Steve Moysan, Jim Nelson, Leonard Mayes, Pat Lehane, Ray Davis, John Blazy, Mike Bateman, and Mike Girard. The two bubble watchers were Dawn Moysan and Allen Hoffman. It was a warm pleasant 75 deg F evening, and Capt. Wayne piloted the "Holiday" down the river and out into Lake Erie, which had 1' glassy seas.

The dive site was the "Old Cleveland Crib," also called "Crib No. 5." This submerged water intake is in 50' of water and is marked by a large buoy less than a mile west of the "5-Mile Crib," or "Crib No. 3," off downtown Cleveland. Despite its name, the "Old Crib" was built after the "5-Mile Crib" and is active today supplying Cleveland with drinking water. Its tunnel was completed in 1917 and goes to the Division Avenue Pumping Station behind the Cargill salt mines near Edgewater. This is the crib where the famous rescue by inventor Garrett Morgan occurred. During construction on July 24, 1916, a pocket of natural gas exploded in the tunnel, killing 11 men and 10 would-be rescuers who were overcome when they entered the pressurized tunnel. Morgan and others used his new safety hood, the forerunner of the modern gas mask, to rescue several trapped workers. Morgan, a black Cleveland inventor, did not receive proper credit at the time, but the Division Avenue Pumping Station's name was changed in 1991 to honor him. Morgan was a prolific inventor and also invented the traffic light.

Upon entering the water, a strong east current was noticed. Descending the single large chain of the buoy, it was found to be attached to a concrete block at the top of the south side of the crib. The crib is constructed of many large stone blocks all neatly piled to form a circular mound with a depression at its top center. The crib is 30'-35' deep at its top, and at the center is the water intake. It is a large recessed cavity lined with wood timbers and a large grate at the bottom. The grate is at a 45' depth, and peering through its openings, a deep vertical shaft can be seen descending into inky blackness. It supposedly descends to a 100'-120' depth. Commercial diving work has recently been done on the crib, and cables were scattered on the grate with portions of the grate scraped clean of mussels to reveal white-painted iron bars. Visibility on top of the grate was an excellent 15', but it was reduced to 8'-10' on top of the crib. A large sheephead was seen in this area.

The outside walls of the crib descend steeply to a 40'-45' depth, and then they slowly taper to the clay bottom at a 50' depth. There was a thermocline at 45', and the visibility noticeably reduced to 3'-5' below it. Therefore, most divers stayed above it to view the debris scattered around the crib's flanks. This debris includes large rafts of wood, metal rails, cables, stray limestone blocks, and other miscellaneous items. Due to the current, visibility was much less on the east side of the crib, but it was better on the west side above the thermocline. Cindy and Kevin ran out three reels totaling over 450' of line exploring the west side, and they still did not see everything. They did, however,

discover some chain that led to a concrete block at one end and a sunken buoy at the other end. The buoy is at a 50' depth lying on its side, and it formerly marked the crib. Interesting features on it include solar panels, a warning sign, and a light at its top. Upon surfacing after an hour dive, many divers caught the sun as it set in the west. A large full moon was then seen rising over Cleveland as they headed back to shore. Many used this time to watch Cleveland's lights while eating their sub sandwiches, which were provided as part of the trip. It was a great relaxing evening that is always a highlight of the summer months.