

Channel Islands Divers



Photo: Franklin Murphy

NEXT CLUB MEETING:

September 16th, 2026
Black Bear Diner
2401 East Harbor Blvd.,
Ventura 93003

Socializing and Dinner: 6:00 PM
Meeting: 6:30 PM

BOTTOM TIMES

By Club President Delbert Stewart



Greetings and salutations, amigos!

What a great time to be a Channel Islands Diver! Our club continues to grow, and we are now 115 members strong! Even better than the number itself is the participation we're seeing. Our trips are filling up, members are showing up to our monthly meetings and our events, and there is a lot of enthusiasm. We are absolutely killing it on participation, and there is still so much more to come!

Our Ensenada trip last month was an absolute blast. It was one of those trips that reminded me why I enjoy being part of this club so much. Great diving, a few unexpected Baja adventures, and most importantly, a really fun group of people to share it all with. If you haven't read the trip report in this issue yet, grab a cup of coffee {or maybe a tequila 😊}, because I got a little carried away with that one! Even more info and pix on our Facebook page.

We, as a club, are not slowing down anytime soon. Our **Refugio BBQ** is September 19, **Cozumel** in October, **Catalina** and **Santa Cruz Island** in November, and our **Holiday Party** in December! Our Baja adventure for 2027 is already picking up momentum...and giving our members even more reasons to get out there and dive together.

I want to mention something that may not always get a lot of attention: our club is doing great **financially!** CID is now in a position where we can independently put up the deposits and upfront costs for our trips. We have built a healthy financial cushion that allows us to plan ahead, secure trips early, even sometimes renting an entire dive boat, and making things happen without having to wait for all the money to come in first. That is a really nice position for our club to be in.

We didn't get there overnight. That financial stability is the result of current and past board members slowly and steadily putting money away, being responsible with club funds, and always keeping the future of CID in mind.

I especially want to recognize our current and past treasurers, because they deserve a huge amount of the credit. They are the ones behind the scenes keeping an eye on every dollar, tracking everything coming in and going out, keeping the board informed, and occasionally reminding the rest of us that we can't spend money just because Del has another great idea. 😊

Seriously, that job takes a lot of time and responsibility, and the financial position we are in today is a reflection of years of good stewardship. So, a big round of applause to our treasurers, and to all of our past and current board members who helped build that cushion one year at a time. 🙌🙌 Today, our entire club is benefiting from it.

Since our current treasurer Stormy Thurston-Keller is stepping down, now's a great time to **get involved with your club!!** Stormy and other previous treasurers will happily teach you all the tricks of the trade so you won't be left to founder on the rocks.

I'm really excited about what the rest of this year—and especially 2027—has in store for CID. We've built some great momentum, and from where I'm sitting, this club is just getting better. Of course, 2027 will be a little different for me because I will not be a board member.

Yep, this will be my final Bottom Times as President. The next one will be written by your new president.

A few people have asked me why I'm stepping down. Is everything okay? Did something happen? Nope. Everything is good. I've always believed that about two years is a good amount of time for a club president. Leadership changes are healthy. A new president brings new energy, different ideas and maybe even a few adventures that the rest of us haven't thought of yet. To me, that's exciting. The club shouldn't belong to one president or one board—it belongs to all of us.

So, to any current or former board member who has thought about stepping into the President position, **I really encourage you to consider it.** I can tell you from experience that it is worth doing. You get an opportunity to help shape the direction of the club, work with a great group of board members and, occasionally, convince a bunch of divers to follow you across the Mexican border 😊

It truly has been my pleasure serving on this board and as your president. I'm taking with me a lot of great memories. What makes those memories special is that **we created them together**. The dives, road trips, meetings, dinners, laughs, friendships and even the occasional chaos...that's what makes CID what it is.

And I'm not going anywhere! I'll just be sitting on the other side of the room as a regular member and looking forward to continue diving with you all 😊.

Del Stewart

Soon-to-be- former President, Channel Islands Divers



CID Cozumel 2026 T-Shirt Design Contest Results



Kelly Sherwood's design (left) won the most votes...and Laura Forsyth came in second (by one vote!). To select your t-shirt, use the order form here: [T-shirt order form](#)

Thank you to all that submitted unique designs!

SEPTEMBER PRESENTATION

Scott Gabara, Marine Ecologist

National Park Service

The Channel Islands National Park Kelp Forest Monitoring Program



Scott will explain the back story that motivates the need for baseline ecological data. He will describe the creation of the kelp forest monitoring program, the methods for data collection, and some recent results. By sharing photos, videos, and data from the program, Scott will share the current condition of kelp forests and what we can learn from long term data.

Speaker bio: Scott holds a bachelor's in marine ecology from UC Santa Cruz, a masters in marine science from Moss Landing Marine laboratory through San Jose State, a joint doctorate in ecology with San Diego State University and UC Davis, and has postdoctoral experience working on glacial melt with the University of Alaska Fairbanks based in Juneau, Alaska. He has been leading the Channel Islands National Park kelp forest monitoring program for the past four years. He enjoys underwater photography and the ability to share organisms and environments that many folks may not be able to experience and appreciate.



Check out Scott's website here (excellent photos!!): <https://scottgabara.weebly.com/>

BOARD ELECTIONS IN SEPTEMBER

Board elections will held be during the **September 16th meeting**. {Last-minute write-ins allowed!!} The three open positions are for President, Membership and Treasurer. To *really* learn what each position is all about, talk to Del, Rob Johnson, and Stormy Thurston-Keller!

CHANNEL ISLANDS DIVERS BOARD AVAILABLE POSITIONS DESCRIPTIONS & DUTIES

For the full description of all positions, refer to the [CID website](#)

PRESIDENT: Develops agendas and conducts the general and board meetings. Aids board members unable to fulfill their positions, and acts as liaison between the club and its sponsors. Writes the monthly "Bottom Times" column for the newsletter.

MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR: Greets and introduces guests, informing them of membership benefits and announces new members at club general meetings. Maintains current membership list, sends monthly updates to the board. Sends list and photos of new members to newsletter editor for publication.

TREASURER: Records and tracks all incoming and outgoing monies. Issues checks, after verification of valid receipts, for co-signature by president. Makes bank deposits of all incoming monies, reconciles bank statements, and prepares monthly and year-end financial statements for the board of directors. Sells raffle tickets at monthly general meetings. Provides data for annual tax preparation and filing of tax-exemption paperwork. Approximate time it takes to complete duties: 3 to 4 hours per month.

HERE'S HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR NAME – SUBMIT TO ANY BOARD MEMBER:

Provide your name, the position you're interested in, and your signature to any board member, in person or via email.

Name: _____ Board Position: _____

Signature: _____

DIVE AGAINST DEBRIS: *More Citizen Science!!*

Date: TBD, end of 2026 or early 2027

Calling all Channel Island Divers! Our underwater paradise off Santa Cruz Island needs our help, and as divers who love these kelp forests, we are the ultimate guardians of this fragile ecosystem. Come join us at our upcoming PADI Dive Against Debris event, where YOU can transform a routine dive into protecting the ocean we love. Every piece of plastic, trash, abandoned net or trap we pull from the reef directly saves playful sea lions and our delicate marine habitats. PADI will collect data during this event to add to the huge database used to “inform policy, drive scientific research, and protect marine life”. Check out PADI’s website to learn more about the AWARE program (Aquatic World Awareness, Responsibility and Education), which is much more than just the important effort of debris removal: [PADI AWARE](#) Let’s dive with a purpose, leave our waters cleaner than we found them, and show the world what true volunteer ocean stewardship looks like.

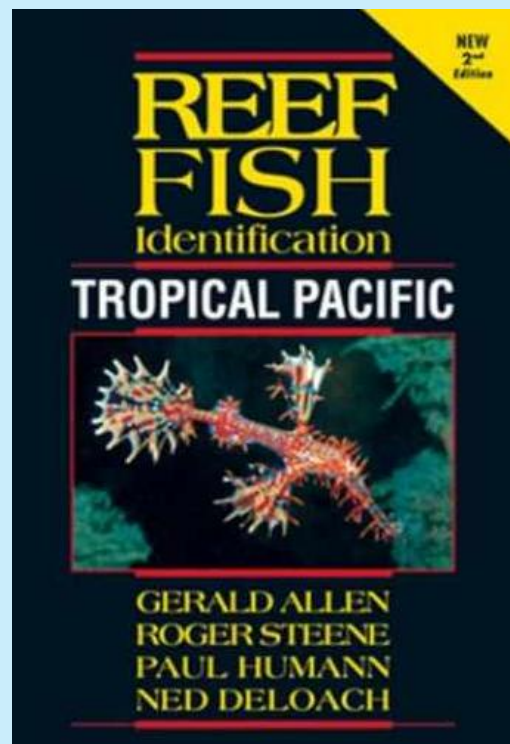
Thanks to Stormy Thurston-Keller for organizing this event!

Reef Fish Identification: Tropical Pacific

by Gerald Allen, Roger Steene, Paul Humann, and Ned DeLoach

Review by Storm Thurston-Keller

Before heading to Thailand, I decided to grab this great fish ID book from our club’s library. Reading up before my trip completely transformed my diving experience. Weeks of browsing through it beforehand meant unlocking the secrets of the reef rather than just swimming past a blur of colors and missing some great photo shots. The guide's intuitive system made it easy to drop into the water and instantly recognize specific creatures (and know how to find others). For underwater photographers especially, this book on the tropical Pacific is the ultimate secret for capturing the perfect shot. It goes way beyond basic names, revealing the camouflage tactics, typical locations, and feeding habits of Indo-Pacific marine life. With these behavioral insights, you can accurately predict when a fish will emerge or how it will react to your presence. That allowed me to sneak up close to an elusive Mantis Shrimp without startling it, film a sea turtle swimming *towards* me, and capture a tornado of barracuda. The background provided by this book ensured the capture of stunning, high-quality photos of Thailand's spectacular marine biodiversity.



Be sure to check out our club’s extensive, world-wide library at the next club meeting before your next adventure (Cozumel maybe?!).



CHANNEL ISLANDS DIVERS

Annual Dive and BBQ

REFUGIO STATE BEACH

SEPTEMBER 19TH

EVENT SCHEDULE:
Divers in the water at **9:00 am** sharp.

Lunch served at 1:00 pm.

CLUB PROVIDES:
Meats, water, lemonade

MEMBERS PROVIDE:
Sides and desserts

BYO:
Chairs, coolers, pop-ups encouraged

**GOOD DIVES
GREAT FOOD
BETTER COMPANY!**

**DIVE
BBQ
RELAX
REPEAT**

LET'S DIVE, EAT & CELEBRATE ANOTHER AMAZING YEAR!

Members with last names starting A-K please bring appetizers & sides, L-Z: bring desserts

MEMBER DIVE REPORTS

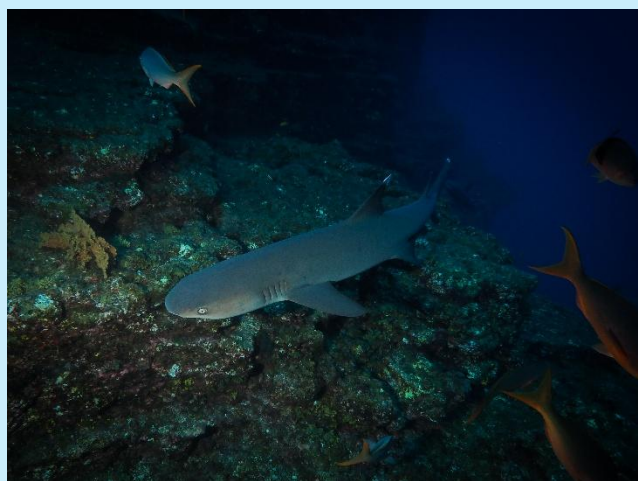
Dive Report: Socorro Story & Photos by Naren Gunasekera



Visiting Revillagigedo National Park, North America's largest marine reserve, in Jacques Cousteau's footsteps has long been a goal of mine. This June, I had the privilege of joining a trip with Nautilus Liveaboards that visited Socorro, Roca Partida, and San Benedicto islands. The crossing takes a full 26 hours each way, leaving out of Cabo San Lucas, which provided plenty of time to bond with the other 17 divers and staff, representing 11 nationalities. Dolphins escorted us on our way, and it was

quite an experience seeing them swimming by out my window while reading a book in my cabin. The diving is not for the faint of heart, with dive sites like Roca Partida featuring vertical cliffs dropping off to over 200 feet, down currents, and blue water ascents. Good air management, awareness and buoyancy are key to enjoying the dives and staying safe. The sightings were out of this world, friendly dolphins, eight whale sharks, Giant Oceanic Mantas everywhere and curious sharks. Highlights included being enveloped in a storm of jacks, finding myself in the middle of a huge yellowfin tuna

pack during a safety interval, a dolphin swimming up to me to give me a thorough look over, and being slapped by a manta as it passed by. A moment of sheer disbelief was the rather comedic sight of a dolphin trying to steal a diver's camera, being interrupted by a pod of dolphins leading a huge whale shark through us. Even the guides were blown away. Nautilus ran a smooth operation, every diver was provided a Lifeline, SMBs, etc., and their dive masters were professional and organized with quality briefings. There were informative sessions on mantas and whale sharks in the evenings, and the food was excellent. The boat was comfortable, though the cabins can get a bit warm at night. If you are looking for big animal experiences, you should put Revillagigedo (Socorro, if you find that hard to pronounce) at the top of your list.



White-tip reef shark

Scan for trip video (created by charter crew)



Ensenada Trip Report August 22-23, 2026

By Del Stewart

Well, my dear Channel Islands divers... we finally did it. We packed up the dive gear, pointed the cars south, and headed across the border for a weekend of Mexico, diving, and whatever else Baja decided to throw our way. We left Ventura at exactly 7ish and had a straight shot to the border. No traffic hold ups...just plenty of munching treats and one pit stop. Once through San Ysidro, we grabbed our tourist visas and commemorated the vibe with a selfie.



Rexy, Del, Stormy, Melanie, Issac, Kelly, Manny & Deidre



Rexy, Del, Stormy, Melanie, Issac, Kelly, Manny, Deidre at Villas Ortega's

Now that we were officially registered, we were on a mission to find a killer spot to chow down and we all agreed to head to Puerto Nuevo Lobster Village. We took the toll roads route recommended by Steve Peterson and made it to Villas Ortega's restaurant just south of Rosarito in about 40 minutes.

With full bellies and nothing but optimism in our souls, we continued our journey south to Ensenada and headed straight to Mares Dive Center to check in. It was a nice little shop downtown. We signed our waivers, checked out our rental gear, and were getting a feel for the crew... and I liked what I was seeing! Ruben, our dive guide, gathered us around the whiteboard and explained the plan for the following day. He talked about the little islands around the Bufadora area where we would be diving. He walked us through the three dives we had ahead of us, told us what to expect, and answered every question we threw his way. He was very friendly and genuinely happy to have us there.

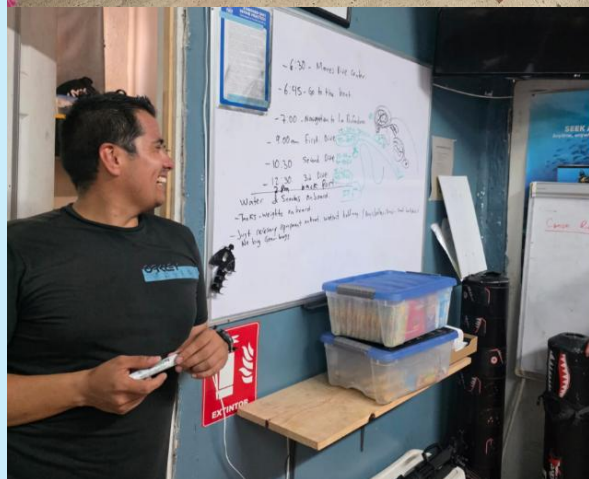


After wrapping things up at the dive shop, we headed over to Las Rosas & Spa to check into our hotel and settle in for the evening. This place has everything you could need. It has a nice restaurant, lounge, infinity pool, jacuzzi, and a spectacular view of the Pacific with stone stairs leading down to the water. The plan now was to just hang loose and enjoy the rest of the day. We jumped in the pool, had drinks at the jacuzzi, dinner on the patio, a few more drinks, and just enjoyed that laid-back Baja vibe... We were in Mexico!

Steve, Stormy, Franklin, Mercedes and Rexy



Next morning we met at the dive shop and followed Ruben down to the marina, where we quickly learned our original dive boat was down. Fortunately, they had a Plan B... a fishing boat.

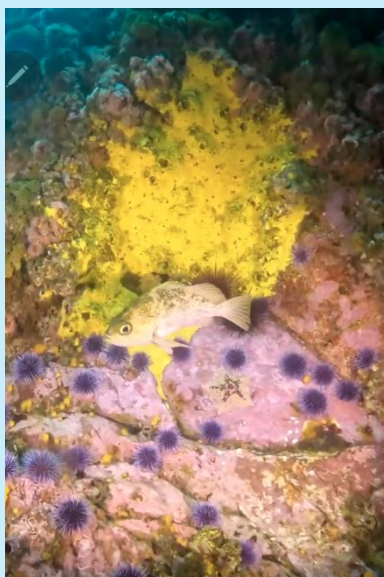


Ruben at Mares Dive Center

Stormy, Rexy, Melanie, Kelly, Manuel & Diedra.

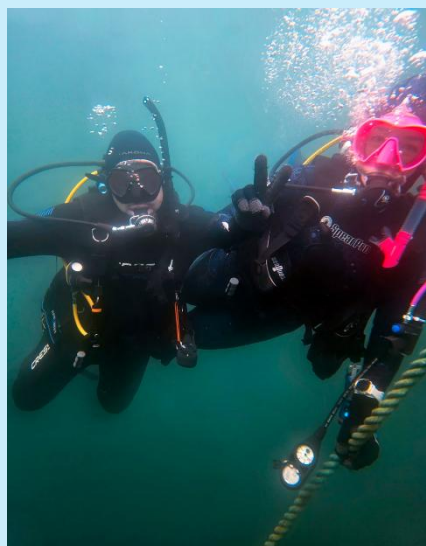


Did all of us and our mountain of dive gear fit? Well... define fit. It was definitely cozy and no one seemed to care. We were in Baja, on our way to dive and everyone was just excited. We packed ourselves in, found a spot wherever we could, and made it work. With everyone aboard and spirits high, we headed out for our first dive. Before long, we reached the Arch site and jumped in after a quick briefing. We followed the leader through the arch and came across beautiful patches of bright yellow sponge formations covering the reefs. The yellow really popped against the darker reef and made for a beautiful scenic dive. The reef system itself was like an underwater labyrinth, with pathways and formations to explore. I went up to the top of the reef to reconnoiter and I could feel the change in the surge at about 20 ft under the surface. The reef system below was surprisingly peaceful and calm, with the bottom at around 65ft. There were no overhead environments beyond the arch, just plenty of reef to wander through and explore. I wish all 115 of you could have been here to see it. Once a member hit half tank, Ruben led us back the same way we came in, eventually passing back through The Arch and heading toward the boat

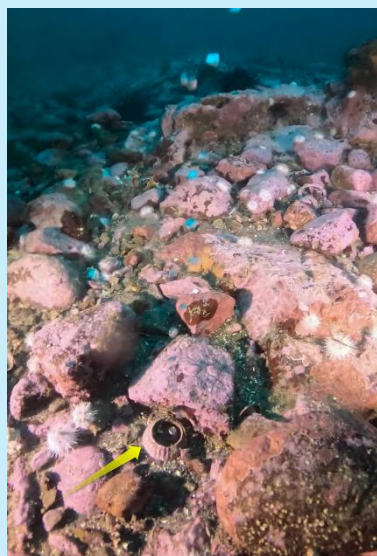


Photos by Melanie Kemmann

The next dive was the most anticipated one...hydrothermal vents!! The boat dropped anchor on top of a shelf that was basically a large pinnacle with a broad, flat top and a pretty big circumference. From there, the walls dropped another 65 feet or so toward the bottom, where the hydrothermal vents were waiting for us. Ruben led us down the anchor line to about 45 feet and continued descending along the reef to around 96ft. A little exploring and there they were... rows of bubbles coming right out of the ocean floor and floating toward the surface. I couldn't help but smile...Mission complete!!! Check out our Facebook page for more pix and a video: [CID FB](#)



*Manuel and Diedra Hurtado
Image by Manuel Hurtado*



*Hydrothermal vent
Image by Melanie Kemmann*

It was cold at 96 feet, and I'm pretty sure the rest of the group was hoping the vents would warm them up a little. I was expecting these little columns just spewing scorching hot water out of them, but nope... apparently nobody told the vents they were supposed to warm us up.

From there, we worked our way around the pinnacle in a spiral, exploring, gradually making our way back up to the shelf and eventually up the anchor line for our safety stop. I would have liked to have spent more time along the way up the wall. There was a lot to explore but I think Ruben was just making sure we all had enough air for a safety stop. Overall, it was a very fun dive.

Our last dive was along the wall at Camp Seven. It was about 1/2-hour boat ride back up the coast. The crew dropped a fishing line in the water... and the fish were biting! By the time we reached the dive site, we already had two bonitos on board.

We wrapped up our last dive, and Ruben broke out the ice chest with the beer and Scorpion Tequila Manny had brought along. Manny came prepared and was kind enough to share with everyone on board. There's just something about sitting on a boat off the coast of Mexico after three cold dives, with a beer in your hand and a little tequila being passed around. Now THAT was the perfect way to end a great day of diving!



Once we got back, we were on a mission for some good food, and we found this little local cevicheria. We were pretty much the only gringos in the place, but they welcomed our group and treated us great. Fresh seafood, Baja-style fish tacos and kind service... and of course, a little scorpion tequila made its way to the table. **NOW we could call it a day.**

Sunday morning came around and it was time to start heading home but we had one more pit stop for the road trip. A beautiful little corridor of restaurants on the outskirts of Rosarito at Los Portales de Garcia. It's a gem filled with Mexican culture, food, thousands of flowers and colorful decorations. All restaurants are along a rocky cliff overlooking the Pacific. We settled into Encanto's restaurant just in time for breakfast. Then, the dancers came out which was a treat all in itself. If you have never been here, amigos, let me know and we will go.

CID road trips are such a blast! I sure hope to see you all on the next one.



AUGUST RAFFLE WINNERS

Prizes sponsored by SC Diving (unless otherwise noted)



Dale Burrows won the Bassdash UPF 50+ Hoodie



Viktoria won the Miflex 250th Anniversary Commemorative Low-Pressure hose



Jessica won the Tilos 2.5 mm Sport Skin Socks.



Michael Malone won the Trident Lobster Hunters Gauge on a Light Kit



Jamie won the handmade mug with magnetic seashell \$50.00 air fill card and Trident U-Mark It gear paint.



Jack & Rex Murphy won the underwater writing slate with pen.



Rob Johnson won the door prize, glow stick for night diving.

RAFFLE DETAILS

1. **Regular:** Buy tickets at the meeting and those are the tickets we draw.
2. **Progressive:** This drawing is pulled from all the raffle tickets you've bought over the Quarter.
3. **Participation:** Points are given for your participation in our club activities (going on club events, posting to our Facebook page, and contributing to the newsletter).

RAFFLE SCHEDULE

January	<i>Progressive</i>
February	Participation
March	Regular
April	<i>Progressive</i>
May	Participation
June	Regular
July	<i>Progressive</i>
August	Participation
September	Regular
October	<i>Progressive</i>
November	Participation
December	No drawing in December

**OCTOBER
PROGRESSIVE
PRIZE: BEACH
BUGGY
{ \$250.00 Value!! }**



Upcoming Dives

Date	Location	Description
19-Sep	Refugio State Beach Park	Yearly club BBQ, dive weekend. Gates open at 8:00 am.
10-Oct	Check Facebook	Club sponsor SC Diving will guide this beach dive.
17-Oct	Cozumel	SOLD OUT
31-Oct	Underwater Pumpkin carving	Sponsored by SC diving, location TBD
7-9 Nov	Avalon, Catalina Island	Casino Pt & Scuba Cat – See special offer below
14-Nov	Check Facebook	Club sponsor SC Diving will guide this beach dive.
21-Nov	Santa Cruz Island trip	Meet at Scorpion Cove for a group day of diving and hiking. Island Packers slots SOLD OUT!!!
12-Dec	Check Facebook	Club sponsor SC Diving will guide this beach dive.
19-Dec	Laguna Beach	Road trip for the last dive of the year
9-Jan-27	TBD	Shore dive
23-Jan 27	TBD	Shore dive

Catalina Trip November 7-9

Special Package Deal: One slot on the Scuba Cat *and* share a room with Del Stewart!!

Contact Del for details: president@channelislandsdivers.org



CLUB CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER
12: Shore dive, TBA 16: Club meeting, regular raffle drawing. Speaker: Scott Gabara, National Park Service Marine Ecologist Board Election!! 19: Club BBQ at Refugio State Beach Park 22: Board meeting	10: Shore dive, TBA 21: Club meeting, progressive raffle drawing. Speaker: Delaney Sauer, CSLB Shark Lab 17-24: Cozumel 24: Shore dive, TBA 27: Board meeting	7: Deadline for Photo Contest submittals 14: Shore dive, TBA 18: Club meeting, participation drawing. Speaker: Dave Finnern, California Wreck Divers Club 21: Shore dive, TBA 24: Board meeting
DECEMBER	JANUARY 2027	FEBRUARY 2027
5: <i>Holiday Party</i> 12: No shore dive 16: No Club meeting 19: Last shore dive of 2026: Laguna Beach	9: Shore dive, TBA 20: Club meeting; raffle progressive drawing Speaker: TA 23: Shore dive, TBS 26: Board meeting	13: Shore dive, TBA 17: Club meeting; raffle participation drawing Speaker: TA 20: Shore dive, TBS 23: Board meeting

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP: 115

Thank you to all renewing members!!

Welcome to our newest members!!



Tom Roberts



Naren Gunasekera



Lane Thompson



Giant Ocean Manta by Naren Gunasekera

Please see our website for member benefits

[Link to Membership Page](#)

Membership Policy: Club policy is to drop members from the roster
THREE MONTHS AFTER MEMBERSHIP EXPIRATION

Membership Prices: Renewing Membership: Single = \$30; Family = \$45
New Membership: Single = \$40; Family = \$55

Please mail renewals to: CID Membership, P.O Box 5801, Ventura, CA 93005

Renew by Zelle: cidtreasurer92@gmail.com



CID Board of Directors

Delbert Stewart: President
president@channelislandsdivers.org

Rob Marion: VP
vicepresident@channelislandsdivers.org

Ann Hoagland: Secretary
secretary@channelislandsdivers.org

Storm Thurston-Keller: Treasurer
treasurer@channelislandsdivers.org

Dan Perdue: Dive Coordinator:
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Laura Forsyth: Webmaster
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Laurie Hennessy: Raffle Coordinator
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Rob Johnson: Membership Coordinator
membership@channelislandsdivers.org

Jackie Worden: Newsletter Editor
editor@channelislandsdivers.org

Steve Peterson: Librarian
library@channelislandsdivers.org

SPONSORS CORNER

Our sponsors generously offer discounts to our members! You *must* show your membership card to reap this benefit. See our Membership Coordinator Rob Johnson to get your card.



Websites:

- <https://www.rec2tecscuba.com/>
- <https://www.scdiving.com/>
- <https://islandpackers.com/>
- <https://scubasolutionsca.com/>
- <https://channelislandsdiveadventures.com/>
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- <https://americandiveco.com/>

