

# CHANNEL ISLANDS DIVERS

## NEXT CLUB MEETING:

**FEB. 21, 2024**

**6:00PM Dinner**

**6:30PM Meeting**

**Black Bear Diner**

**2401 E. Harbor Blvd.**

**Ventura, CA 93001**

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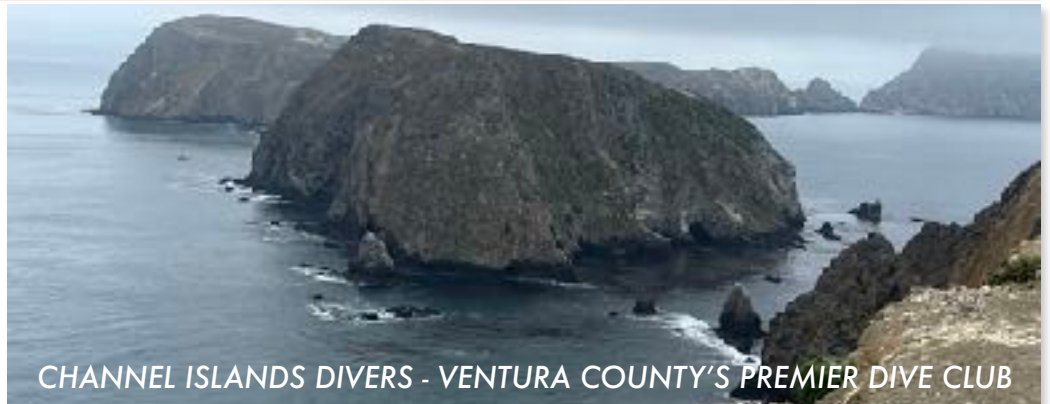
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### **Many Thanks to our Club Sponsors!**

- ✦ **Channel Island Dive Adventures**
- ✦ **Maverick UnderSea Divers (MUD)**
- ✦ **Island Packers**
- ✦ **Black Bear Diner**
- ✦ **PCH Scuba**



CHANNEL ISLANDS DIVERS - VENTURA COUNTY'S PREMIER DIVE CLUB



## BOTTOM TIMES

By Mike Cunningham

Club President

Welcome to February, Channel Islands Divers. Have you got enough rain yet?

I am so done with this rainy season. I get it, we need the rain, but not all at once! So, I was sitting around this last Sunday when I happened upon our Facebook page. Seems a whole bunch of Channel Islands Divers flew across the country to Florida just to get sidelined and had to wait around for a storm to pass, or something like that. I didn't check later but I'm guessing things got a bit better for them at least.

Here in California, not so much. We still have a week left of forecast rain. I'll wait until March, might be drier.

And now for something completely different.

Somehow after all these years of meetings, for the first time I know of, we were just told that 3 tickets for dinner went unpaid at last month's general meeting over at Black Bear Diner. My guess, shared by others, is that the staff was just overwhelmed, got too busy, found themselves in an overcrowded, last-minute rush and just didn't get the tickets out to all the people in a timely manner. Maybe the rush to get out caught them

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## Channel Islands Dive Adventures

### OIL RIG DIVING

Are you looking for more advanced diving trips than are typically offered by the club?

Specifically, would you like the opportunity to dive the Olympic wreck and oil rigs off San Pedro? Then you are in luck because Channel Islands Dive Adventures (CIDA) has four opportunities to dive the Olympic and the oil rigs in 2024!

- Sunday, 02/18/2024 – Giant Stride with 6 divers; 3 dives, snacks, air = \$225
- Saturday, 05/24/2024 – Giant Stride with 6 divers; 3 dives, snacks, air = \$225
- Friday, 07/26/2024 – SoCal Dive with 12 divers; 3 dives, snacks, air = \$230
- Friday, 11/0/2024 – SoCal Dive with 23 divers, 3 dives, snack, air = \$230

Club members receive a 5% discount on all CIDA trips. To obtain discount code and additional email CIDA at: [ken@channelislandsdiveadventures.com](mailto:ken@channelislandsdiveadventures.com)

Check out CIDA's website for additional advanced diving opportunities: [channelislandsdiveadventures.com](http://channelislandsdiveadventures.com)



by surprise at the counter and someone walked out, with every intention of making good at a future date, I'm sure.

We took care of our guest speaker but got told that someone had already paid for ours. Teresa tried again later and got told the same thing. That might be one of the 3, maybe. I can see someone paying for ours by mistake and then they don't get their own only to have it surface after we all leave. I think new staff got flooded with paper and something got lost somehow. They informed us through unofficial channels, a board member eating there on a non-club night. They had no other information than 3 tickets, no amount, no they had this or that and then followed it all up with it's no big deal, don't worry about it. Well, if it happened, it is a big deal and we do worry about it so I'm including it in the Bottom Times.

We always said the club will honor all the orders. It's not official policy and we don't publicly state it out loud, but we told them from the start that we will honor what goes unpaid.

On the bright side, at the January general meeting, if you were there, you heard it and heard it loud. I brought the club's old speaker system in. At the last meeting in 2023, Black Bear Diner had a new sound system. They also had a new manager, but I don't know of any connection. From the start, we would use our wireless microphones and run it through their system. It worked, most of the time. This new system we found waiting for us that night was horrible. It had sound effects and other enhancements that just did not work for us, and we could not turn them off. It was decided we would go without a mic that night and try to speak loudly. Mostly a failure it turns out. Most could not hear. I was 10 feet from the speaker and could not hear him most of the time. So, I dusted off the old stuff and made sure all the pieces we needed were there and working then packaged it all up and brought it with me to the next meeting. A bit more work but was desperately needed and we have the stuff on hand, so use it. I have a few more speakers that are just sitting around, small but powerful and now all I need to do is find cables for them, test them out, and if all goes as I think it will, they'll be able to hear us in the back of the restaurant. It's easy to turn them down, not so the other way.

The point is if you attend the next meeting, February 21, over at Black Bear Diner starting around 6:00pm for some light socializing with the official starting time of the meeting being 6:30pm and you still can't hear us, it's you. Check the batteries in the hearing aid and replace as needed because we will be loud enough for us all, as it should be.

Hope to see you all there.

## **February Speaker: Chuck Graham**

*Adventurer, Kayaker,  
Photographer, Author, and more!...*



### About Chuck Graham

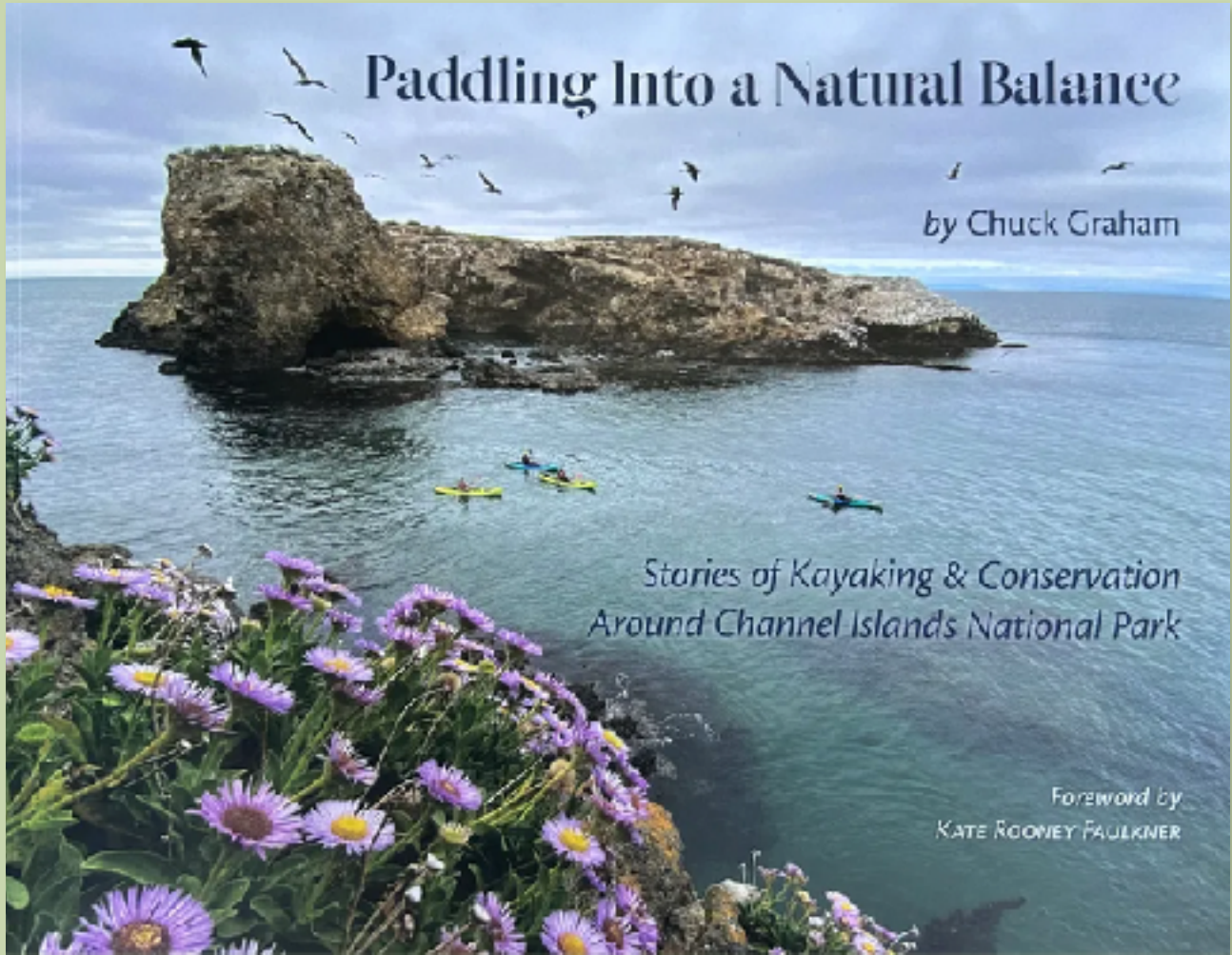
Chuck Graham is a freelance writer and photographer in Carpinteria, CA. He's also been a beach lifeguard for over 20 years, works as a guide for Channel Islands Adventure Company leading kayak tours and backpacking trips at the Channel Islands National Park, and is the editor of DEEP Surf Magazine.

His stories and photos have appeared in Backpacker, Trail Runner, Men's Journal, Outdoor Photographer, Shutterbug, Photo Technique, Nature Photographer, Living Bird, Earth Island Journal, The Surfer's Journal, The Surfer's Path, Standup Paddle Magazine, SUP the Mag, Canoe & Kayak, Adventure Kayak, Sea Kayaker, Islands, American Forests, BBC Wildlife, Bay Nature, Outdoor California, Ojai Quarterly, Santa Barbara Seasons, Los Angeles Times, Santa Barbara Independent, Montecito Journal, Natural History Magazine, High Country News, National Geographic for Kids, and the Ventura County Reporter.

Commercial clients include, Patagonia, Willow Creek Press, Channel Islands National Park, Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary, California Coastal Commission, Los Padres National Forest, Photographer's Market, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Tidelines Calendar, and Channel Islands Provisioners.

We are excited to welcome Chuck to the Channel Islands Divers monthly meeting on *February 21!*





Order Chuck's new book on his website [chuckgrahamphoto.com](http://chuckgrahamphoto.com)



# SCENES FROM THE IMAX & CA SCIENCE CENTER JANUARY 13, 2024

## *Our first outing of the New Year!*

By Sandy Bickford, Dive Coordinator



**The Channel Islands Divers (L – R):** Sandy Bickford, David Morrison, Jennifer Morrison, John Wolfe, Melissa Wolfe, Jimmy Harvey, Carrie Eller, Andrea Dransfield, Jason Kraus, Cindy Doyon, Mike Doyon, Sammy Marion, Laura Taylor, Eric Taylor, Rob Marion, Lina Marion, and Tony Frabasilio.



Admiring the solid rocket booster and external fuel tank for the space shuttle *Endeavor*.



The excitement builds as the movies are about to begin! (photo courtesy of John Wolfe)



After the movies, Rob and Sammy enjoy the walk-through tube of the Kelp Forest Environment exhibit.



Andrea managed to get a closeup of one of the Kelp Forest residents. (photo courtesy of Andrea Dransfield)



Feeding the fish. Measuring the fish and checking their health. Cleaning the tank. What a fun job!



You've gotta admit, this diver looks happy! (photo courtesy of John Wolfe)



A stealth fighter in flight, and.... (photo courtesy of Andrea Dransfield)

... one last look at the solid rocket booster and external fuel tank for the *Endeavor*.

(photo courtesy of John Wolfe)



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## Member Profile: Eric Taylor, Club Member Since 2021

**Read about Eric's latest sailing adventure in the historic Baja Ha-Ha Cruisers Rally from San Diego to Cabo San Lucas**

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### Lessons from the 2023 Baja Ha-Ha



**By Eric Taylor**

Our sailboat, Rampant 2 is a 1982 Cal 9.2, half-ton. This is hardly the kind of boat one expects to see making a longer distance cruise. We made it from Oxnard, Channel Islands to La Paz and back to Oxnard in two months, traveling about 2,500 miles.

In many ways the rally lived up to our expectations. In other ways, we were severely tested. The organization set up by Richard Spindler and Patsy Verhooven and Latitude 38 magazine was polished and clearly shows their experience with this event. The support was there.

We attempted to make anchorages at night, twice, in unfamiliar anchorages. We dragged, twice. We failed to have enough spares (there are never too many spares!) and we spent a lot of time scouring La Paz for what we needed. It was not easy.

What we did learn is the Mexican people are kind, friendly and helpful, almost to any person. There are resources in Mexico if you are persistent and lucky. We had to deal with two boat yards and one emergency haul out. Both Marine Group in Los Cabos and Baja Naval in Ensenada gave great service to us.

During the two months we had seven different engine malfunctions, lost an anchor, chain and rode, spent a lot of money getting stuff fixed, and somehow managed to sail almost the entire way from Cabo to Oxnard without an engine in the so called Baja Bash. I think we got lucky. Our most difficult incident happened on the leg going south from Isla Espiritu Santo to Los Cabos. Our second anchor rode was in a milk crate in the lazarette and tipped over in a gale. It found our prop shaft and wrapped tightly, splitting the packing gland in two. Four hours later, we somehow used our battery-powered grinder to break up the chain and cut away the nylon rode to reveal a lot of water pouring in through the now ripped up packing gland. We slowed the leak with duct tape. It is scary to watch the ocean pouring into the boat, offshore, in a gale. The management of the situation was a lesson.

*[continued on next page](#)*

We called the US Coast Guard who started monitoring our situation. We had an AIS transponder so they knew where we were. The US Coast Guard coordinated with the Mexican Coast Guard and the consensus was for us to sail 70 miles south to Los Cabos. We did this with a double-reefed main only, in 35 knots, and a six-second wave period, downwind. Every hour we had a check in call with the US Coast Guard. The Mexican Navy sent out a boat and shadowed us all the way into the harbor at Los Cabos. The marina at Los Cabos sent out a tow boat when we were just outside the harbor to give us a tow to the fuel dock. The next day we learned two other sailboats had been dismasted in that storm that night and towed into Los Cabos. Northers in the Sea of Cortez are dangerous! Our experience in the northern Santa Barbara Channel is very different from what we experienced here.

Despite all the trials and work getting things fixed, when we did have time for diving, it was spectacular. When Laura and I did the two week liveaboard traveling the length of the Sea of Cortez two months prior, in September, we got a flavor of the different kinds of locations in the gulf. This trip was all snorkeling and freediving in the La Paz area and south to Cabo Pulmo. This time, I was able focus on the shallower water coral reefs around Isla Espiritu Santo and Isla Partida as well as the reefs on the south side of Cabo Pulmo and at Ensenada de los Muertos south of La Paz. Those reefs north of Cabo Pulmo do not have much diversity of coral species, mostly Pocillapora species, but they are coral reefs. They are very shallow, less than 15 feet, mostly, and tucked up against the reflecting south facing cliffs. Seeing clouds of sardines being herded by Roosterfish up against the cliffs while Booby Birds, Cormorants, and Pelicans dive-bombed them from above was truly spectacular.

After getting back home, I've had some time to reflect. We beat back up the Baja Coast (translation: sailed against the wind). It took nine days to get the nine hundred miles from Los Cabos to Oxnard in a thirty-foot-long boat. The three Baja capes were kind to us. That is not their reputation. As I said, we got lucky. If you asked me today if I would do it again, I would say no. The travel time and the time away from family is too much for two or three weeks of quality time hanging out on the islands of La Paz. Better to fly down, charter a boat and let someone else get it ready and clean it up. Was it a true bucket list adventure? Unqualifiedly, yes!

-Eric Taylor





**NEW EVENT!****MONTHLY BEACH DIVE**

**WHEN:** Each Saturday after the club's monthly meeting.

**MEETING TIME:** 8:00 AM

**COST:** Usually free, except for parking in some cases.

**LOCATION(s):** TBD, depending on ocean and weather conditions

**LUNCH:** Usually following the dive at an agreed-upon restaurant

**DIVE LEADERS:** Del Stewart and Mike Frabasilio

Because this event is free, it is open to non-members!

Last August, we led a shore dive at Leo Carrillo State Beach. The dive was very well attended, with 11 divers braving the ocean waves, which is a fantastic turnout for a beach dive! Well... we had so much fun on that dive, we decided to lead a monthly beach dive for club members, and non-members are also invited to dive with us. Once a month, we will meet at the dive location on the Saturday morning immediately following the monthly club meeting. Since the location for a beach dive depends on the weather and ocean conditions, the exact dive spot will be chosen by the Wednesday monthly meeting and announced at the meeting, on the club's Facebook page, and by an email blast to club members. Most of the shore dives will be one tank, unless the group agrees otherwise.

The regular, monthly beach dive will begin the Saturday following our March 20<sup>th</sup> meeting, which means we will dive on **Saturday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>**. The schedule for our regular monthly beach dives for the remainder of the year is as follows:

- \* Saturday, March 23
- \* Saturday, April 20
- \* Saturday, May 18
- \* Saturday, June 22
- \* Saturday, July 20
- \* Saturday, August 24
- \* No beach dive in September due to the Annual Refugio BBQ & Beach Dive
- \* Saturday, October 19
- \* No beach dive in November due to the Annual Catalina Trip
- \* Saturday, December 21



Photo by Sandy Bickford

If you have any questions or suggestions for beach dive locations, please feel free to email Del at [webmaster@channelislandsdivers.org](mailto:webmaster@channelislandsdivers.org) or Mike at [librarian@channelislandsdivers.org](mailto:librarian@channelislandsdivers.org).

*A sign-up sheet will be available at all monthly meetings so we can determine the interest in the club's monthly beach dive.*

# Channel Islands Divers Gallery

Send photos for the newsletter to [editor@channelislandsdivers.org](mailto:editor@channelislandsdivers.org)



Eye of cornet fish by Stella Vaccaro



Thank you to our January speaker Ken Kollwitz for some great travel tips!



A calm moment during the Baja Ha-Ha sailing adventure by Eric Taylor



**Reminder!** Our annual photo contest is back on for 2024, to be held in December - Prizes will be given!



## Channel Islands Divers Win Big!

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### January Raffle Winners...



#### GENERAL PRIZE DRAWING:

- ◆ Delbert Stewart – PCH Scuba \$50 gift certificate
- ◆ Lauren McDonald – Polar Evolution waterproof gloves
- ◆ Mike Cunningham – Neosport 5mm scuba booties
- ◆ Rachel Rosson – XS Beefy nylon socks
- ◆ Alex Wied – Phenom quick-release fins

#### DOOR PRIZE:

- ◆ Steve Peterson – Marine grade double-ended, stainless bolt snap

#### PROGRESSIVE DRAWING:

- ◆ Bill Weinerth – Dry Robe dive parka



# C A L E N D A R

<p><b>FEBRUARY 2024</b></p> <p>21 General Meeting Speaker: Chuck Graham Expert Kayaker and Author</p> <p>26 Board Meeting</p>	<p><b>MARCH 2024</b></p> <p>20 General Meeting Eric Taylor/Laura Forsythe</p> <p>23 Club Beach Dive* 25 Board Meeting</p>	<p><b>APRIL 2024</b></p> <p>17 General Meeting Jimmy Harvey Navy Diving</p> <p>20 Club Beach Dive* 22 Board Meeting</p>
<p><b>MAY 2024</b></p> <p>15 General Meeting Milton Love Rigs to Reefs</p> <p>18 Club Beach Dive* 20 Board Meeting</p>	<p><b>JUNE 2024</b></p> <p>19 General Meeting Speaker TBD</p> <p>22 Club Beach Dive* 24 Board Meeting</p>	<p><b>JULY 2024</b></p> <p>17 General Meeting Speaker TBD</p> <p>20 Club Beach Dive* 22 Board Meeting</p>

\*Location of Beach Dives TBD

## Board of Directors

Mike Cunningham, President  
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Bill Weinerth, VP/Speaker Seeker  
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Rob Marion, Secretary  
[secretary@channelislandsdivers.org](mailto:secretary@channelislandsdivers.org)

Ann Hoagland, Treasurer  
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Sandy Bickford, Dive Coordinator  
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Stella Vaccaro, Newsletter Editor  
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Del Stewart  
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Teresa Ray, Raffle Coordinator  
[raffle@channelislandsdivers.org](mailto:raffle@channelislandsdivers.org)

Laura Forsyth, Membership Coordinator  
[membership@channelislandsdivers.org](mailto:membership@channelislandsdivers.org)

Mike Frabasilio, Club Librarian  
[library@channelislandsdivers.org](mailto:library@channelislandsdivers.org)

## Current Membership: 102

*Welcome new member Sam Newcomer!*

### Membership Policy:

Club policy is to drop members from the roster **THREE MONTHS AFTER MEMBERSHIP EXPIRATION.**

### Renewing Members:

Single - \$30 Family - \$45

### New Membership:

Single - \$40 Family - \$55

[membership@channelislandsdivers.org](mailto:membership@channelislandsdivers.org)

Please mail renewals to:

CID Membership

P.O. Box 5801

Ventura, CA 93005



Or renew via Zelle from your app/website.  
Send payment to: [cidtreasurer92@gmail.com](mailto:cidtreasurer92@gmail.com)  
Add message with description, e.g., "shirt", "trip deposit", "membership renewal", etc. *Thanks!*