

NOVEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER

# CHANNEL ISLANDS DIVERS



Photo: Franklin Murphy

**NEXT CLUB MEETING: November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025**  
**BLACK BEAR DINER**  
**2401 EAST HARBOR**

**VENTURA CA 93003**  
**Social and Dinner: 6:00 PM**  
**Meeting: 6:30 PM**

## BOTTOM TIMES

**By Club President Delbert Stewart**

Greetings and salutations, and welcome to the November edition of Bottom Times. I hope you're all doing well and settling into the fall rain — it feels like it arrived a little early this year. I'm starting to think our club might be a pretty reliable predictor for bad weather: all we have to do is schedule a boat dive and boom... here comes the storm. Rob Marion pointed out it has happened three times now. We were all set for a fun day on the Spectre, ready for some diving and club camaraderie, and well... you know how that turned out.

### Bonaire Reflections

I guess I'll have to wait a little longer to feel the chilling waters of the Pacific after being spoiled by the warm Caribbean. Diving without a wetsuit was amazing. I have never done so much diving in my life and not get tired! A total of 20 dives, all with the convenience of tossing tanks into the back of the truck without needing to ask or wait for fills. Buddy Dive really knows how to cater to divers. The dock was spectacular and full of tanks alongside the turquoise water. We were absolutely spoiled there. The only hard part about this trip was leaving.

The food was affordable and really good — buffet-style breakfast every morning, followed by two boat dives, lunch at the resort then beach dives. And while there were no flamingo tacos, we did see plenty of actual flamingos. We tried the traditional cabrito stew (goat), kind of like birria, and it was delicious.

The restaurant was literally in the middle of nowhere — driving down dirt roads, wondering if the GPS was working. Ha ha — it was phenomenal!

We drove our rental trucks from one end of the island to the other. The locals were friendly. We dove with turtles, saw all kinds of fish, and huge tarpon that loved our lights during the night dives. I can't express how satisfied I am with this trip. I'm definitely going back someday.

I really would have loved to see more of you beautiful people in Bonaire, but I completely understand — life gets busy and we all have priorities. If diving brings you joy, then diving abroad will absolutely floor you, especially if you've never done it — and even more so in warm water. No wetsuits to deal with. Just tank up and jump in. So cool.

OK, enough about Bonaire — I'll save the rest for our VP, **Rob Marion**, and our former editor, **Franklin Murphy**, who will be presenting the full trip report at this month's meeting.

## 2026 CID Trip Planning — Your Vote Matters!

We're already working on planning our 2026 dive trip, and I'm excited! But where do we go? How do we decide? Well — that's up to **you**. You are the wind in our sails (air in our tanks?).

At the November meeting, you'll have the opportunity to vote on where we head next year. It's simple: just attend the meeting, fill out the survey, and let us know your top choice. Based on your feedback, we'll work hard to make it happen.

Our Dive Coordinator is already researching costs for several destinations, and we've completed an internal survey to help narrow things down. The groundwork is already in motion.

## Club Events & Good Vibes

This October and November were full of great energy, and to keep with good vibrations...

The Underwater Pumpkin Carving Contest, hosted by our newest sponsor, SCDivining, was a fun event, even with a small turnout. Congratulations to Connie for taking 1st place and Eduardo for taking 2nd! Big shout-out to our new Dive Coordinator, Divemaster Dan for leading the way.

## Holiday Party — December 6th

Looking ahead, we've got a busy start to the holiday season. On **December 6th**, we'll be hosting our annual Holiday Party — and you truly don't want to miss it.

I skipped a few my first year as a member, mostly because I didn't know everyone that well and figured, "Eh... I'll go next year." But I wish I hadn't waited — I liked it so much I ended up becoming President.

There's always plenty of food, everyone is friendly, and the White Elephant/Pirate Snatching gift exchange is an absolute blast. It gets loud, rowdy, and fun... it really is one of the highlights of the

year. And of course, we'll have some great prizes to give away. Our Raffle Coordinator has a solid budget to work with this year, so if you needed one more reason to come — that's it.

Our beach diving is winding down, as it always does this time of year. I won't be in town November 22<sup>nd</sup> — I'll be heading to Arizona — but I know there's interest in getting a dive together. We'll talk it over at the meeting and see who's up for it.

We also have our last beach dive of the year on **December 20th**. Everyone in the club is officially obligated to attend... just kidding. But last year two of us showed up, so this year I'm hoping we can bump that number to four. A 100% increase — now that would be statistically phenomenal. ☺

### **November 19th Club Meeting**

I look forward to seeing everyone at the **November 19th meeting** at Black Bear Diner. Come hungry, bring your good vibes, and let's enjoy another evening together.

## **NOVEMBER PRESENTATION: BONAIRE!!**

### **By Club Members Rob Marion & Franklin Murphy**

October 18, 2025, ten CID club members arrived in Bonaire at the Buddy Dive Resort to enjoy the sights and incredible diving of the Caribbean. Bonaire is an island about 24 miles long and 3 miles wide, 50 miles off the north coast of Venezuela in the Leeward Antilles. It is one of the “ABC” islands of Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao.

Our trip included three boat dives. Most of us also tried out some of the multiple beach dives, for which Bonaire is famous. Although the island isn't big, there are plenty of things to see & do in and out of the water, including the terrestrial Washington Slagbaai National Park and the Bonaire National Marine Park. The presentation will include photos, videos and narration of the entire trip.

### **Speaker Bios:**

**Rob:** “I began diving in 1974 and shortly after decided to become a commercial diver. In 1975, I attended the Commercial Dive Center in Wilmington, California, a school for commercial diving. I was hired in early 1976 by a company out of Singapore where I began my career as a commercial oilfield diver. I spent seven years working as a commercial diver diving to depths up to 445 feet.

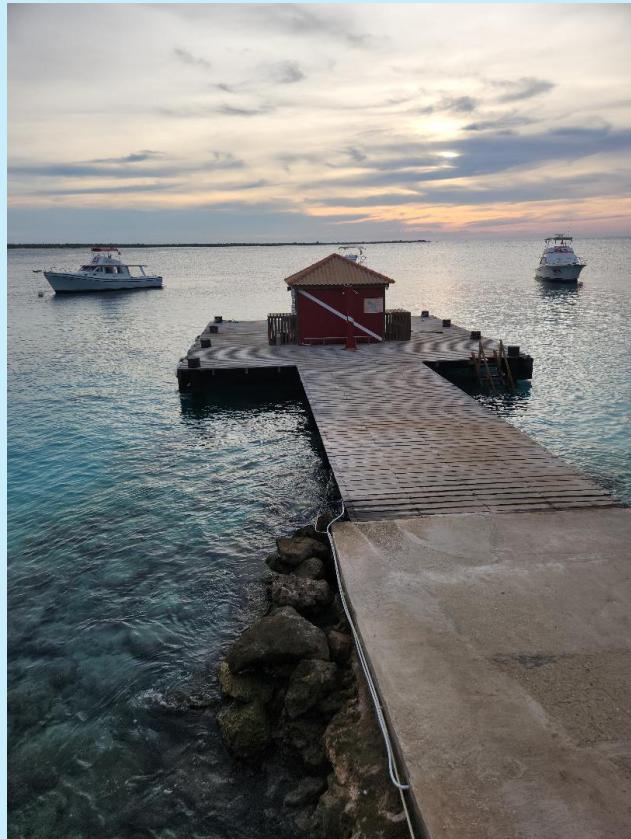
“I didn't dive for quite a while after leaving the industry but then decided to get back to recreational diving. About 5 years ago I got recertified. At the same time my wife Lina became certified, and shortly thereafter my daughter Sammy was certified.”

**Franklin:** Franklin Murphy has been a freediver for as long as he's been able to swim, exploring waters from the Pacific Ocean to Lake Mead for more than 35 years. Although freediving has been a lifelong passion, he became a certified scuba diver in 2022 and has since logged over 100 dives on his own boat as well as on most of the dive boats throughout Ventura and Santa Barbara counties. His favorite dives involve pursuing lobster and gliding through the beautiful kelp forests that line the California coastline.

Franklin holds a degree in biology from the University of Colorado and has worked in the life science field for more than 20 years. As an avid surfer and fisher, he maintains a deep respect for the ocean, coastal ecosystems, and the wildlife they sustain. Since joining Channel Islands Divers in 2022, he has made many friends and unforgettable memories, most recently returning from an incredible trip to Bonaire in the Dutch Caribbean. True to form, he is already planning his next tropical dive adventure.

In addition to his life in the water, Franklin is also a professional piano player with more than 35 years of experience performing in clubs throughout California and Colorado. His passion for the arts extends into video creation and editing, and he frequently shares his work across Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube.







## Bonaire trip report: Mike Cunningham

Back at the end of August, I got an email that was sent out to the club looking for one more person to join about 14 others in Bonaire for a week of diving. Teresa Ray read the email and wanted to know if I was interested, yeah, maybe. I'll think about it. Oh, come on, you deserve it, you'll have fun, go. So, on orders from the wife, I took the spot. Seven days in Bonaire, how many dives can I possibly get in? Big numbers I'm thinking. Then I think, why only seven days? I started looking into classes to take while there. I need 11 days for their Instructor Development Course (IDC) and then the Instructor Examination (IE). Time to become an instructor? I'm getting too old for that so I looked at other courses. Technical diving has always interested me, so I started there. I found what I liked but couldn't come to terms with the resort on room cost. You know, being a single but paying for a double. No, they wouldn't budge. I get it, but still. At this point, I'm way down that rabbit hole and I can't quit now. I kept searching.

Captain Don's Habitat, right next door to Buddy Dive. They had a good price with a nice package. I started talking to their booking folks when she began rattling off a price about \$400 less than the online price, *and* they upgraded me to ten boat dives with unlimited shore diving. I even had them add a boat dive and shore diving on my last day there. Normally you don't dive the last day because you're flying out, but not me, since I'll just be walking next door to Buddies and my CID crew. Booked it right

away. Their classes were full, but that didn't stop me. Since I'll have ten days of diving by myself, why not a Self-Reliant diver class with VIP Diving? PADI's version of solo diving. Since I always wanted to do that, I did.

I land in Bonaire, I get all settled in my room and go exploring. Captain Don's policy is no diving until you go through a dive orientation. They have one every day at 9:00 am. Then I noticed some guy cleaning glasses at the outdoor covered bar. No one else is there, it is only 3:30 pm and since they won't let me dive, I grab a seat. I struck up a conversation with who would soon be my best friend in Bonaire, Kevin, the bartender. I ask, "Are you open?" No, we open at 4:00. So I have to come back in a half hour just to get a rum and coke? He smiled, said it's 4 o'clock somewhere and started pouring. I've had more rum than dives at this point, That's not why I'm here.

Next morning I did the orientation, got weighted right and did some dives off their reef. Three dives now.

The next day I made it to VIP Diving for my solo class. Did all the usual stuff; book work with some class lectures, then I was given my bailout bottle. A small 30cf hanging tank off my left side (*Editor's note: a bailout bottle is a small, high-pressure emergency air supply, aka pony bottle*). Bigger than what I needed but the best they had. I'm diving with only 12lbs, 2-3's on each side and walking on those not so even but very sharp rocks on the beach dives, all of which became important after five dives. Turns out, somewhere, me or someone, shifted my weights around, I ended up with 3-3 lbs on my left and only 1-3 on my right side. Add to that the 30cf on the same side, it started to make sense. Every time I stepped on something uneven on the left side, I went down. Hard sometimes, not counting the serious face plant I did on our last dive. All that weight plus that bailout bottle, all on my left side, I'm lucky to have any skin left on my knees. But five dives later, I'm certified Self Reliant. Total dives, 8.

Boat Dive, Boat Dive, Boat Dive, Shore Dive. Sometimes I'd mix the order up and unless I thought about a night dive on the reef, I'd add in a cheeseburger or pizza, rum and coke to end the day. Four dives, then 4 more, followed by 4 or 5. Found that if I ordered a pizza for dinner I could save some for the next day between boat dive 1 and 3, when I would go back to my room and microwave it. Made all the difference. Then I discovered if I waited until after boat dive 1 and 2, I could have warmed up pizza and still make boat dive 3. When not on a boat, shore diving at their reef is where you'd find me. I still didn't have a truck. That came 6 days in. Breakfast in their restaurant, dinner in their bar. Dive, dive, dive – repeat. Day 6, 16 or so dives. Got myself a truck and it continues. Rough duty, but I was up to the task. 23 dives later.....



Buddy Dive & Captain Don's

After 10 days of this grueling schedule, it was time to go next door. Buddy Dive does orientation for new divers when they arrive, so the Channel Islands Divers, me included, were in the water before it got dark. And so went the next seven days; 2 boat dives followed by multiple shore dives.

So, after 18 days of this, yep, I was beat down tired. Face was sunburned and I think I was coming down with something. I have been telling people I had 37 dives in when this all wrapped up, I miss counted. I rested the last day and half, not really looking forward to the return flight. I came to the party late. All the good fights were taken. What I had to choose from was Bonaire to New York, Kennedy. Then Kennedy to LAX, arriving at 2:00 am. I took the long way home. I booked the late flight because I didn't want to be held up in Customs and miss the plane. Turns out there was no Customs to speak of, just grabbed the bags and walked on by them. So, I sat there, at Kennedy airport having tacos and beer. It did feel odd having tacos in New York, don't know why, just did. All along I kept doing a count of sorts on the number of dives I had. While enjoying my tacos, I came up with the magic number: yeah, I had more than the 37 dives I've been telling people for this trip. Kind of

answered why I was tired but what a blast. I did have an ace up my sleeve. Plan your dive, dive your plan type of thing. In advance I knew I was going to be exhausted before I took the long way home. I thought, Jet Blue has first class and they have seats available. Yes, I did! I upgraded. Business class from Bonaire, the best they had. Then first class all the way from NY to LA. They moved me from row 3, where I was next to someone, to row 1, Nobody there. Took the window seat, had a great meal and then those seats reclined flat, like a bed. And that's where I spent the next about 6 hours. Almost the whole way I slept well.

Go to Bonaire for just short of three weeks and go diving, I was told. Go have fun, she said. I did and I'd do it again in a heartbeat. The final count? 40 dives in 18 days.



# Member Reports, Local Dives, Special Events

## October 25<sup>th</sup> Underwater Pumpkin Carving

We had a great time at the Underwater Pumpkin Carving Contest hosted by new club sponsor SCDivining! With a lot of our club divers on their way home from Bonaire, we had a modest turn out with three club members joining the contest. Eduardo was awarded Second Place and a \$50.00 shop gift certificate, while new member Connie was awarded 1st place and a \$100.00 gift certificate, and I, your newly elected Dive Coordinator Divemaster Dan! We had excellent viz at Broad Beach in Malibu, easily 20 feet plus! We carved the pumpkins at depth of 17 feet and had to learn to adjust for pumpkin buoyancy and a bit of an underwater surge. After the contest I had the pleasure of leading our fun divers on a tour of the reef. If you weren't able to attend, I hope you will next year - it was a blast!



# Dive Report: A Day to Remember

By Steve Peterson

- Date: 10-29-25
- Conditions: Darn near perfect. Almost an east wind day; sunny & hot, no wind, glassy ocean, 62 degree water.
  - Visibility: 3 to 10 ft.....but you don't really need good viz to catch bugs.
  - Dive buddy: Don Sisting
  - Depth: 4 to 15 ft during our ~1 ½ hr dive time

We launched Don's boat from Ventura Harbor and went up the coast. First, we checked out a favorite rock-pile in 50 ft of water. The viz there looked sketchy and there were no commercial lobster buoys on the site. That told us that the bugs probably weren't at that depth & were most likely shallow, since the commercial guys would have had traps set if lobster were around. So, we headed into shallow water to try our luck.

Shallow water was a good choice. The bugs were there, tucked into their holes in the shallows. I caught my biggest two in about 4 feet of water. Even though I have a heavy weight belt, I had to carry around a small boulder to stay on the bottom in such shallow water. This developed into an interesting challenge in that; I had to drop the boulder to catch each bug & then I would float to the surface while trying to measure it. I had lots of practice measuring short lobster. There was just enough bump in those waves to keep a guy honest while being tossed around by the surge.

We dove two tanks and each of us caught our limit of seven. When taking off my wetsuit at 4:00 pm, it was sunny and hot. It felt so toasty & comfortable! Much different from winter California diving. We cruised back to Ventura over a flat ocean at 32 knots. Next January or February, this will be a day to remember when our weather turns unfavorable.

Unfortunately, after cleaning up, I was late to the club board meeting that evening. That's the price you sometimes pay for great recreation. (Editor Note: Not only was Steve late, he didn't bring any bugs to prove his alibi!!)



Steve with Rocky 3 and a 9.8 pounder a few years back near Arco Island, diving from his kayak.

I'd like to remind club members that we have some fantastic diving along our local coast. Whether you swim from shore, use a kayak, or take a boat, there is a fun adventure just waiting for you in each of those kelp beds. I hope you can enjoy them as much as I do.

PS: I had a knee rebuilt last February & was not sure if my time-tested body would stand up to the abuses of diving again. It is a great pleasure to be able to safely get back into productive lobster harvesting again.

## *Fun Facts: California Spiny Lobster*

Our local 'bugs' are occur from Baja north to Point Conception, and rarely up to Monterey Bay. Hunting season is September 26, 2025 to March 18, 2026, with a collection limit of sever per person and a minimum size of 3¼ inches in length. Not only a CA fishing license, but also a Spiny Lobster Report Card is mandatory.

Did you know California spiny lobster is more highly prized world-wide than even the famous Maine lobster? The majority of the commercial catch is shipped overseas, which is why spiny lobster are rarely seen in local fish markets.

These lobsters can live 30 to 50 years, with the record over 70. According to NOAA, a 10-pound lobster could be 50 years or older.

They migrate in spring, moving into shallower coastal waters and in the fall, moving into deeper waters. They've been documented moving in large, single-file groups, which the science hippies postulate may help with navigation and streamline their movement.

## OCTOBER RAFFLE WINNERS

Prizes generously donated by SCDiving (except wagon, which was from CID)



Dale Burrows - Straw mat (Laurie's favorite!)

Joe Hennessy – The coveted folding wagon



Lauren McDonald – Lobster (face?) gauge

Lauren (again!) – Lobster kit



Guy McVicker – Underwater 'paper' & whistle



Laurie Hennessy – Scuba blade & scuba do-rag



We offer three types of raffle, which occur as noted in our club calendar:

1. Regular monthly drawing: Save your losing tickets for the Progressive drawing.
2. Progressive drawing: This drawing's winner is pulled from all the losing tickets you've purchased since the previous Progressive drawing. You must have the winning ticket with you to claim your prize.
3. Participation drawing: Our Raffle Coordinator will draw a name from the list of people participating in club events, posting to our website or Facebook page, or submitting an article or photo to the newsletter (hint, hint). Wear club apparel to an event and get your name in the drawing twice. You need not be present to win.

# Upcoming Events:

**November 22<sup>nd</sup>:** Beach dive Point Dume

**December 6<sup>th</sup>:** Scuba Santa! Every year at the Pleasant Valley Aquatic Center Pool 1030 Temple Ave Camarillo. This year it will take place on Dec 6th at 9 to 1130, same day as our CID holiday party. Our Clubs' own Don Maulhardt will be dressing as Santa and Robert from club sponsor SCDiving will be taking pictures. We will have Scuba Gear on site avail to use or Divers are welcome to bring their own gear. There is a 5.00 pool use fee. Tips are appreciated!

**December 6<sup>th</sup>:** CID Holiday Party!! See details on Page 17.

**December 20<sup>th</sup>:** Beach dive; location TBA

**February 2026 – Baja Bound!** The October newsletter described a trip to Baja planned for this February with Don & Brandee Sisting, Steve Peterson, and - of course - Ranger. If you're interested in joining or would like more info, please feel free to contact Steve at (805) 643-5834 or [Library@channelislandsdivers.org](mailto:Library@channelislandsdivers.org).

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Be sure to pick up your *Official Membership Card* from Rob Johnson, your membership coordinator. Show these cards when visiting our sponsors to get your discount!



# CLUB CALENDAR



<b>NOVEMBER</b>  <b>1:</b> Lechuza beach dive <b>15:</b> Spectre boat dive <b>19:</b> Club Meeting, participation raffle drawing <b>Speaker:</b> Rob Marion & Franklin Murphy will regale us with info on the Club's trip to Bonaire! <b>22:</b> Point Dume beach dive <b>25:</b> Board Meeting	<b>DECEMBER</b>  <b>6:</b> Holiday Party!! <b>7:</b> No beach dive <b>17:</b> No Club meeting <b>21:</b> No beach Dive <b>23:</b> No board meeting	<b>JANUARY 2026</b>  <b>3:</b> Beach Dive TBA <b>21:</b> Club Meeting, regular raffle drawing <b>Speaker:</b> TBA <b>17:</b> Beach dive County Line <b>27:</b> Board Meeting
<b>FEBRUARY</b>  <b>7:</b> TBA <b>18:</b> Club Meeting, participation raffle drawing <b>Speaker:</b> TBA <b>21:</b> La Janelle wreck <b>24:</b> Board Meeting	<b>MARCH</b>  <b>7:</b> Beach Dive TBA <b>18:</b> Club Meeting, regular raffle drawing <b>Speaker:</b> TBA <b>24:</b> Board Meeting <b>28:</b> Underwater Easter egg hunt, location TBA	<b>APRIL</b>  <b>4:</b> Beach Dive TBA <b>15:</b> Club Meeting, progress raffle drawing TBA, <b>Speaker:</b> TBA <b>18:</b> Beach dive <b>21:</b> Board Meeting

# Let's Celebrate!

*Channel Islands Divers Holiday Party  
December 6<sup>th</sup> 6:00 pm until  
we shut the place down!*

Pepper Farms Club House  
2281 Calle Bellota, Camarillo, CA  
Hosted by Dave and Jennifer Morrison



## The Feast

The board will be bringing the main course — smoked turkey, traditional turkey, and ham carved to perfection — plus taters, gravy, stuffing, rolls, butter. Add in hot spiced cider and we are off to a great start!

## Bring a Dish

Everyone else, that means you, please help fill in the gaps with your favorite goodies. Pastries, charcuterie boards, meatballs, cookies, smoked salmon canapés, pigs in a blanket, wings — whatever you love to share, it always gets gobbled up!

## The Fun Stuff

- **Our hilarious White Elephant/Pirate Snatching Game** — Bring a \$25–\$35 gift, ocean or diving-themed (interpret that however you like).
- **Photo Contest Awards** — Winners announced and awarded.
- **Surprise Giveaways** — Your Board's fun way of spreading a little extra holiday cheer to you, our wonderful members!

## BYOB

Feel free to bring your own adult beverage if you would like to add a little extra holiday cheer.

## RSVP. Two

Please email [President@channelislandsdivers.org](mailto:President@channelislandsdivers.org) or sign up at November's meeting with the number of guests you are bringing (including yourself). Everyone is welcome!

We hope you can join us for an evening that celebrates the friendships, adventures, and underwater memories we have shared throughout the year. Your presence is what truly makes this club special, and we cannot wait to kick off the holiday season together. Come hungry! It'll be a fantastic night with our CID family.

*See you all there*

# Book of the Month

## Shipwrecks of Southern California By Patrick Smith and Bonnie Cardone

*Shipwrecks of Southern California* chronicles the lives of vessels which have gone to the bottom along the California coast between Surf (near Vandenberg) and San Diego. The history of each of these ill-fated ships is presented in rich detail as well as a description of what scuba divers can expect when visiting these wrecks.

In this book, I enjoyed learning the history of many of the wrecks that I had previously read about, dove upon, or watched crumble in the surf over the years. Landmark shipwrecks such as the *Dominator* in Palos Verdes, the *Chickasaw* on Santa Rosa Island, and our local *La Jenelle* in Oxnard. Learning the cause of these wrecks was also an eye-opening education. I was amazed how many of the wrecks ran aground in the fog or darkness before radar. Many other ships broke anchor in storms and were washed ashore. To me, as a small boat owner, this book shows how important radar, GPS, and good anchoring techniques are when visiting our local islands.

I'm sure that many of our club members remember Underwater Archaeologist Pat Smith. He has been a CID Guest Speaker numerous times with several different presentations. Pat has since passed away, but some of his knowledge will be passed on through his book.

Many thanks to club member Steve Ehert for donating this book (and many others) to the CID library.

*Book review brought to you by club librarian Steve Peterson*



*On April 13, 1970, gale force winds wrecked the 500-foot cruise ship, La Janelle, onto Silver Strand Beach. The two onboard crew members were saved.*

*Source: <https://captainstableblog.com/forgotten-hero-ship-the-wreck-of-la-jenelle/>*

# Please see our website for

## member benefits

<https://www.channelislandsdivers.org/membership>

### **CURRENT MEMBERSHIP: 105**

**Big shout-out to all renewing members!!**

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: [ciddtreasurer92@gmail.com](mailto:ciddtreasurer92@gmail.com)**

### Board of Directors

Delbert Stewart: President  
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Rob Marion: VP  
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Steve Peterson: Librarian  
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**SDiving**



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