



2026



## SharkBait Monthly Meeting

WE meet at 6:30 on the second Tuesday of each month, except December, at Denny's Diner in Yorba Linda 17568 Yorba Linda Blvd. That is the corner of Richfield and YL Blvd. Enter off Richfield. We are also on ZOOM for those of you off our beaten track to join in.



See you there, in person or on the screen

## February Featured Speaker

Kayla Fearheller, Founder and President BleuWorld

Kayla is a scuba instructor, a scientific diver, and a freelance conservationist who has pursued ocean exploration and science in every aspect of her life since she began her ocean journey when she moved to California in 2021.

Kayla's career as a software engineer is centered around ocean technology. She joined Coral Gardeners in June, 2023 and works alongside engineers and scientists on the CG Labs team to build a Reef Observation System. She has experience in projects processing bathymetric seafloor data and automating coral reef health models. She volunteers her time to restoring coral reefs, studying whale sharks, and monitoring kelp forests all over the world. She's passionate about keeping our oceans clean and she hosts beach cleanups as often as she can.

### BleuWater Mission:

Our mission is to build a community of ocean changemakers with a passion for conservation, exploration, and science.

We work with our partners to provide opportunities in the ocean to people from all walks of life with a special focus on programs for children, underrepresented and diverse communities, and students in the environmental sector.

February 10 Club Meeting  
Denny's Diner Yorba Linda 6:30

February 15 Beach Dive  
Woods Cove, Laguna Beach 7:00 AM

February 21 Avalon Harbor Cleanup  
See details in the Newsletter

March 10 Club Meeting  
Denny's Diner Yorba Linda 6:30

March 15 Beach Dive  
Crescent Cove Laguna Beach 7:00 AM

May 6 2026 Chamber Day/Eve

May 30-31 SCUBA Show  
Long Beach Conv. Ctr

Typically, gaining in-ocean experience comes with a large bill, making it inaccessible to most. With fundraising efforts, Bleu World will reduce or eliminate these costs for ocean experiences all around the world.

In the words of Baba Dioum, "We will love only what we understand and we will understand only what we are taught."

## 2026 Club Officers Appointed by the Board

Our Board elections were held at the January meeting and all nominees were elected for the 2026 term Year.

At the January Board meeting, the Board appointed the following members as officers of the club for the 2026 Term Year. In addition, responsibilities for the various committees were made and are listed below.

A hearty welcome to our incoming Board members, and a vote of confidence for our club officers and committee heads. HIP HIP HOORAY.

President	Monica Villegas
Vice President	Rick Lindwall
Secretary/Treasurer	Alf Johnson

### Committees

Beach Dives	Martin Carreon
Boat Dives	Christine Riley
Speakers, ZOOM, Tech	Rick Lindwall
Public Relations, Social Media, Website, Membership	Silvia Swigert
Warm Water Trips	Dave Stewart
Newsletter	Alf Johnson
Special Events	Barry Bloch, Vlad Ilinsky

## Meet The Board

This month we get to know another of our Board members and newly elected President Monica Villegas.

Monica Villegas



Certifications: NAUI Open Water (1992); NAUI Advanced (1995); NAUI Rescue (1996); PADI Nitrox (2024)

From: Native Southern Californian – relocated to San Diego

Occupation: (Military) U.S. Coast Guard Veteran; (Civilian) Human Resources professional

About Myself:

I'm attending National University, San Diego. I am currently completing a Master of Arts in

Human Resources Management and will be re-entering the civilian workforce.

### Why Sharkbait Dive Club?

Looking back to 1992, I never could have predicted that a solo certification at Sport Chalet would lead to a lifetime of belonging. What began as a practical necessity for a trip to the Bahamas transformed into the unexpected gift that keeps on giving. While I may have started that first international trip as the only diver in the group, Sharkbait ensured I would never have to dive alone again.

### Finding My Place

As my passion grew, I found myself wanting more out of the sport. I took advanced lessons and logged countless beach and boat dives. I even spent time shopping for a community—checking out other clubs and attending various meetings to see where I truly fit. Ultimately, nothing compared to Sharkbait. I dove headfirst into the community, volunteering for SCUBA Santa at Sport Chalet, joining beach clean-ups, and attending those epic holiday events at the Killams. Listening to Don and Rita

## Meet The Board (cont'd)

regale us with stories of warm-water trips and participating in Catalina Chamber Days made me realize this wasn't just a place to find well-trained dive buddies—it was a place to find a family. By diving with others and eventually helping create the Dry Team for beach dives, I didn't just become a better diver; I made lifelong friends. Before I knew it I was part of the Board.

### A Legacy of Connection

My heart is full when I think of the people who turned a club into an extended family. I am profoundly grateful for the mentors and friends who shaped my journey:

**The Technical Guides:** Jason Baron, who helped me conquer equalizing; Pat Toler, who taught me the Zen-like art of breathing underwater; and Dave Stewart, whose leafy seadragon calmness remains my inspiration.

**The Adventurers:** Martin's infectious passion for Laguna Beach night dives; Dave Goodale's eye for the perfect sunset; and the tireless work of Rick, Chuck, Joel, and Ron, who keep our community connected through technological expertise.

**The Travelers:** The endless laughter and shared horizons with Silvia, Randy, Stacy, Kurt, Alicia, Jeff, Charles, and the incomparable adventurer, Christine.

Through beach clean-ups, holiday parties at the Killams, and those legendary Dry Team mornings, I didn't just become a more confident diver—I made lifelong friendships.

### Diving into the Future

While our history is rich, I am even more excited about where we are headed. Watching our new board members take the helm and seeing our community thrive in our hybrid meetings at Denny's fills me with such optimism. The guest speakers enhance and expanding our environmental preservation concerns.

Sharkbait has given me more than I ever imagined: lifelong friendships, a deeper respect for our oceans, and memories that still make me laugh out loud. As we look toward the horizon, I am eager to see how this club will continue to expand your lives just as it has mine. I look forward to learning from our newest members and embarking on the next generation of adventures—both on land and under the sea.



## **Beach Dive February 15 Woods Cove Laguna Beach 7:00 AM**

Woods Cove is a fairly large cove divided in two by a large rock structure at the surf line. On the Northwest side of the cove about 50 yards out are two rocks that break the surface. These are huge boulders that extend 20 feet down surrounded by smaller rocks with abundant marine life. Out from the southern most reef is a small underwater arch with Garibaldi and a great picture taking spot. The reefs straight out beyond there are spectacular. Huge boulders with ledges and caves harbor a variety of marine life. The reef extends quite a way offshore offering additional sites to explore

The access point to Woods Cove is almost directly off PCH. Turn toward the beach on Diamond Street and park on Diamond or Ocean Way. The beach access is at the end of Diamond Street

Meet Martin there at 7:00 AM

## **Beach Dive March 15 Crescent Cove Laguna Beach 7:00 AM**

The options at Crescent Bay are numerous. To the South are reefs with large crevices, one of which leads over to neighboring Shaw's Cove. There are times when the surge in this passage is very strong so enter with care. On the North side is another reef which is a fun place to traverse. Beyond the reefs here lie Seal Rocks, a pair of rocky spires on which Sea Lions "haul out" to rest and sun themselves. Here you may have the opportunity to cavort with these playful and graceful mammals. They love to dive, zoom right at your face and pull up just at the last second, mouth open, blowing bubbles.

The fish life at Crescent includes Opaleye, Garibaldi (of course), Surfperch, and other usual suspects. Depths here range from 10 to 25 feet with vis in the 15 to 20 foot range.

Access is off of Circle Way near Cliff Drive. You Have Two Options:

There is a stairway off Circle Way leading down to the Cove. Circle Way is a One Way Street - Access is about 2/3 the way around the Circle.

There is also an access way at the intersection of Circle Way & Cliff Drive

## Annual Avalon Harbor Cleanup Dive

The 44th Annual Avalon Harbor Underwater Cleanup on Saturday, February 21, 2026, where divers clear debris from Avalon Harbor, with check-ins starting early (7-8:45 AM) and the dive from 9:30-11 AM

The Catalina Divers Supply and the USC Catalina Hyperbaric Chamber invite you to participate in this monumental and worthy event.

The Avalon Harbor Underwater Cleanup has grown into one of the major dive events in Southern California. This annual endeavor to clean Avalon's spectacular harbor attracts 600 participants from across California and neighboring states. Following the Cleanup Dive the Awards Ceremony is highlighted with A raffle with some awesome items included.!

Proceeds from the event benefit the USC Catalina Hyperbaric Chamber, a life support decompression facility on Catalina that serves as a safety net to the thousands of divers who frequent the nearby waters. Proceeds will also fund improvements of the Avalon Underwater Dive Park directed by the Catalina Divers Supply.

Our club is now on the list for the sign ups for 2026. When you sign up, you will be asked what organization you are signing up with. Sharkbait is included in the list so be sure to click on that choice We will be meeting at the Green Pier as usual for anyone signing up. This way one of us can check in for all of us making it easier for everyone.

Rick, Martin and a several other Sharkbait members are planning to attend this annual fun, and worthy event. Contact Rick for additional details or go online to the official website for more info and to register. <https://www.avalonharborcleanup.org/>

## New Year New Funnies or maybe more of the same????

What does a baby computer call his father?  
Data.

After an unsuccessful harvest, why did the farmer decide to try a career in music?  
Because he had a ton of sick beets.

I only seem to get sick on weekdays. I must have a weekend immune system.

My friend was showing me his tool shed and pointed to a ladder. "That's my stepladder," he said. "I never knew my real ladder."

What do you call a Frenchman wearing sandals? Philippe Flop.

Why is it so cheap to throw a party at a haunted house? Because the ghosts bring all the boos.

I don't get why Marvel doesn't use the Hulk to advertise more. He's basically one big Banner.

What brand of underwear do scientists wear?  
Kelvin Klein.

Which days are the strongest? Saturday and Sunday. The rest are weekdays.

I just found out I'm colorblind. The news came out of the purple!

Did you know your pupils are the last part to stop working when you die? They dilate.

My wife asked me the other day where I got so much candy. I said, "I always have a few Twix up my sleeve."

How do cows stay up to date? They read the Moo-spaper.

Where do pirates get their hooks? Second hand stores.

## **Dive Anxiety**

I came across a good article on DiverNet by Dale and Kim Scheckler on the subject of overcoming Diver Anxiety. Dale and Kim are long time Southern California divers and former publishers of California Diving news and founder of the SCUBA Show.

The article is worth reading in whole, but I thought I would highlight some of the points they write about.

### **Preparing Properly Before the Dive**

Being anxiety-free in the water begins out of the water. Pre-dive prep is important. Take your time packing. Get a good night's sleep. Hydrate. And arrive at the boat early. Assemble your gear early, preferably even before the boat leaves the dock. And take proper seasickness actions.

### **Choosing and Using the Right Dive Gear**

A lot of divers experiencing anxieties in the water are for the simple fact of equipment problems. Probably the most-critical piece of gear that causes more anxiety in the water than any other is a dive mask. A mask must fit properly. The best place to choose a mask that fits you properly is at a professional dive store with the help of a good pro.

Wetsuits should fit close to the body but not constrict the chest or around the neck. Too tight a wetsuit and breathing will be restricted, and a tight neck will limit circulation.

Ill-fitting fins are murder over multiple dives causing cramping and chaffing. Too many divers skimp on fins. Function is nearly as important as fit.

### **Keep your gear simple**

Keep your dive gear simple, especially when you are getting accustomed to new tasks and conditions underwater. For example, do not purchase a tremendously complicated dive computer when you start and all you plan on ever doing is a basic sport diving profile. The computer should be user intuitive much like a simple phone app. Read the manual. While still dry run through

each feature. Some computers even have a simulated dive mode.

### **Equipment Organisation and Familiarity**

You might be very familiar with how your BCD functions but if you can't find the inflator when needed it does you no good. Keep that inflator close to your body, not floating over your head. The same is true for your gauge console.

### **Weighting, Buoyancy and Physical Control**

One of the least-understood techniques and skills in sport diving is proper buoyancy.

With a new or unfamiliar wetsuit it is difficult to estimate proper weighting as a starting point. There is an old rule that states that, with a full 7mm wetsuit (typical to California diving), you start with 10% of your body weight.

### **Staying Within Your Comfort Zone**

If you can think you can handle yourself in 3 foot high surf, cut that in half to 1.5 feet... or maybe even just ankle slappers

### **Keep it slow**

While there is no reason to dilly-dally, you should take your time before hitting the water. Do not let the boat crew or your buddy rush you, even if that means you are the last ones off the boat. Pace yourself. Once in the water take the time to regain your composure after your giant stride. Breathe. Take your time.

### **Fitness, Experience and Focus**

Get in shape

Dive a lot more

Focus on the task at hand

## Annual SCUBA Gear Service

Well, spring is on it's way and it may also be time to make sure your gear is in tip top shape.

Annual scuba gear service is generally required every year or every 100 dives—whichever comes first—to ensure safety, maintain warranties, and prevent equipment failure. Key components requiring annual service include regulators, BCD inflators, and dive computers. Servicing usually involves disassembly, ultrasonic cleaning, O-ring replacement, and testing by authorized technicians.

Key Aspects of Annual Scuba Gear Service:

**Regulators:** The primary life support system, requiring annual inspection of the first and second stages, with overhaul often necessary.

**BCD (Buoyancy Control Device):** Annual check of the bladder, inflator mechanism, and dump valves. And don't forget, if you have a second stage regulator as part of uyour inflator, that needs to be serviced also.

**Dive Computers & Gauges:** Battery changes, seal checks, and firmware updates.

**Cylinders:** Visual inspections (VIP) are required annually, with hydrostatic tests usually every 5 years.

Don't forget about your mask, snorkel and fins. Inspect them for tears or cracks or excessive wear.

Dive lights inspect the batteries and might as well replace them. Make sure the on off switch operates smoothly.

Wetsuits should be inspected for tears, verall contitions, and zippers lubricated.

Dive Bag, look for tears, roller damage, handles condition and lubricate the zippers. And of course, get rid of any "junk" in the bag. Things seem to accumulate there.

## Fathom Fantasies Chuck Wade Underwater Photography

Our Sharkbait member and buddy, Chuck, is restarting his underwater photography business. You may remember Chuck's awesome photographs when he shared some of his work with us last year. Before he put his underwater camera away a decade or more ago, Chuck was actively shooting underwater photos of our local critters and exhibited and sold his work at the Laguna Art Festival for several years.

Well, now he has dusted off his skills, upgraded his equipment, and is actively shooting again. Specifically, he is offering his photography skills to photograph you underwater.

Chuck is looking to commemorate in pictures new divers as they get certified during their first ocean dives. Additionally, recording experienced divers as they achieve advanced certifications from advanced all the way up to Instructor.

This is a great way to memorialize these events and chronicle your diving progress and adventure.

## Still available Club T-shirts & stickers!!

After what seems like forever, we finally have T-shirts with the Sharkbait logo front and back.

In addition, we have window stickers which you can adhere to the outside of windows, bumpers, doors or just about anything. They are vinyl and the manufacturer says they should stand up to the sun for quite a while.

E-mail Alf Johnson to order  
alfjohnson1@gmail.com

Sizes M,L,XL,XXL 95% Cotton  
\$25 Shipped



Vinyl Sticker 4" X 4"  
\$2 each or 3 for \$5

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## We Like

### World Of Diving

Dive Travel

<https://worldofdiving.com/>

Ryan Dandy



<https://getinspiredinc.org/>



**Scuba World**  
Orange, Ca.

1706 N Tustin St,  
Orange, CA 92865  
(714) 998-6382

### Fanthom Fantasies Chuck Wade

Personalized Underwater Photography

[Chuck.wade@yahoo.com](mailto:Chuck.wade@yahoo.com)

## Club Board Members



Monthly club meetings with speakers and raffle prizes  
Monthly Newsletter  
Land-based Club activities and events for the whole family  
Organized local dives  
Resort warm-water trips  
Good dives and good buddies  
Membership costs are as follows .

..  
New Membership:  
Single \$40 pp  
Family \$50 (couple/family)  
Renewal:  
Single \$30  
Family \$40

You will get a reminder when your renewals are due

### **Club Contact/Social Media Information**

Website  
Sharkbaitdiveclub.org  
Facebook  
SharkBait Dive Club -  
SoCal  
Twitter  
@sharkbait diver  
Scubaboard  
Scubaboard.com

### **President**

Silvia Swigert  
silviaswigerts@gmail.com

### **Vice President**

Rick Lindwall  
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### **Secretary/Treasurer**

Alf Johnson  
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Martin Carreon  
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Monica Villegas  
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### **Board Member Emeritus**

Randy Garcez

### **Board Member Assignments**

Alf	Membership, Newsletter
Barry/Vlad	Special Events
Christine	Boat Dive Liasion
Dave	Warm Water Trips
Martin	Beach Dive
Rick	Speakers, ZOOM
Silvia	Public Relations, Publicity, Social Media, Website