

NEWSLETTER



# San Jose Flipper Dippers

JANUARY  
2026

GENERAL MEETINGS HELD  
3RD WEDNESDAY  
OF EACH MONTH  
[WWW.SJFLIPPERDIPPERS.COM](http://WWW.SJFLIPPERDIPPERS.COM)

## New Board takes over for 2026

Congratulations to our new 2026 Board! Above from top right:

**Barbara Davis** (Pres.),

**Sim Upadhyayula** (Vice Pres.),

**Tom Gardner** (Treas.),

**Grace Chi** (Sec.) and

**Howard Chien** (Sgt.-at-Arms).



Thanks to this great group who stepped up to lead the Club for 2026. We're sure this will be another great year of diving and other activities that everyone will enjoy.

Be sure to join in on the virtual Planning Meeting on January 28 to review the year's major activities. And remember, you can always sign up to lead a dive or any other activity! 🌟



## Stand up straight for the group photo!



We had 14 Dippers and friends join in on the December 29th dive at Point Lobos. Sunny skies and cool temperature welcomed the group for a great day of diving. The ocean didn't disappoint with small swell, little to no surge and 30-40 foot of visibility in the outer areas of Whalers Cove. It was a great way to end 2025 and welcome the new year. Eight of the group in the photo include, from the left: **Eva Alexander, Tom Earl, Ken Iron Diver Agur, Cedric Wright, Shelby Alexander, Carl Tuttle, Jeremiah Horn and Thomas Stevenin.** Missing from the photo included **Tom and Jackie Gardner, Jing Ye and Emily Agur, Howard Timoney, and Donovan Hill.** This is what diving is all about! (See more photos on page 4) 🌟



### You've Got to be Kidding Me!

Yes, it's true. **Sim Upadhyayula** scored 2 of the cash envelopes off the Christmas tree during the December General Meeting raffle. See page 5 and see how much he won. 🌟

## What's Inside?



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## PRESIDENT'S CORNER



**Hi All!**

**H**appy New Year! I'm looking forward to some great diving in 2026! Let's make sure our gear and ourselves stay in great shape and let's continue our club's great safety record. We look after ourselves and our buddies and we take the time to mentor our new and prospective members.

The Club offers its members a wide variety of skin and Scuba diving activities and other social, sport, recreational and community service projects in which participation is both enjoyable and rewarding. I am proud to have been a member of our club since 1993!

We had a great hybrid general meeting on December 17th. Unfortunately, I was not able to attend in person, but I heard there was an abundance of yummy goodies and a great raffle. We also elected our 2026 Club Officers. I want to thank the 2025 club officers for their willingness to continue to serve in 2026!

As for upcoming activities, we have the business meeting on Wednesday, Jan 7th, followed by the S3 dive on Saturday, Jan 10th, and the General Meeting on Wednesday, Jan 21st. And on Wednesday, January 28th, we have our virtual Annual Planning Meeting to plan the Club's calendar for the coming year. Everyone is encouraged to join in and share their ideas for dives and other Club events.

I look forward to seeing many of you at our upcoming meetings and events in 2026!

**Let's go diving! – Barbara**



# San Jose Flipper Dippers

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CLUB OFFICERS

### PRESIDENT

Barbara Davis 408-656-6390

### VICE PRESIDENT

Sim Upadhyayula 408-608-5009

### SECRETARY

Grace Chi 858-337-2674

### TREASURER

Tom Gardner 408-274-9447

### SERGEANT AT ARMS

Howard Chien 408-410-0325

CLUB COMMITTEES

### AWARDS AND FINES

o Position Open o

### MEMBERSHIP

Ken Agur 408-242-3779

### NEWSLETTER & WEBSITE

Carl Tuttle 408-829-3660  
email [tutcomms@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tutcomms@sbcglobal.net)

### PHOTOGRAPHY

Mike Chalup 408-744-1868

### RAFFLE

o Position Open o

### REFRESHMENTS

o Position Open o

### STAR ACHIEVEMENT

Jackie Gardner 408-274-9447

### TROPHY COMPETITION

o Position Open o



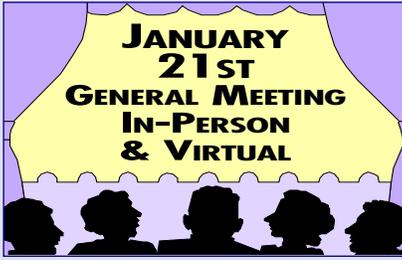
## Annual Club Planning Meeting

**O**ur annual Club Planning Meeting for 2026 has been scheduled for a virtual meeting on **Wednesday, January 28**, at 7:30 PM.

This is where the decisions are made on dates for major Club events and activities, and the master calendar for the year is set. **All new 2026 Club officers AND committee heads should plan to attend.**

Any members interested in being involved in planning Club dives and activities are encouraged to join us. Everyone please enjoy your appetizer-type dish along with something to drink.

The meeting will be held virtually and will begin promptly at 7:30 pm. Email **Carl Tuttle** ([tutcomms@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tutcomms@sbcglobal.net)) for the MS Teams link to the meeting, if you need it, and a copy of the preliminary calendar. The final calendar will be posted on the Club's Website. 🌟



We'll be having our in-person General Meeting this month. If you come please bring a refreshment to share! We'll have a live MS Teams connection for those who still prefer to meet virtually. ☆

## MEMBERSHIP

*Ken Agur*

We're a dive club and we're diving! If you're looking for a dive buddy look no further. See the Club's website for more information on becoming a member

(Membership Requirements). We'd love for you to join us! **Happy Birthday New Year Babies!** Someone was doing the Hokey Pokey during the month of August so **Grace Chi** and **Dennis Nasont** are this month's birthday winners. ☆

## CLUB DUES LAST CALL

**Don't get dropped off the list to get notifications of Club dives and activities!**

It is well past time to pay your **annual dues** and **we'd hate to loose you!**

Dues help cover a portion of the yearly room rental, website hosting, domain name registration and newsletter printing and distribution. Each member will also be asked to sign an "Assumption of Risk Agreement" when dues are paid (the form is available on the Club's Website). If you can't make the in-person General Meeting please send a signed copy with your dues in the mail to: **Tom Gardner**, 2986 Everdale Court, San Jose, CA 95148. Contact Tom if you want to pay your dues in cash.

**Club Dues this year are \$50.00 and \$10.00** per year to receive this Newsletter via the U.S. Postal Service. Or download it FREE each month from the Club's Website in full color. Charter and Lifetime Members will continue to receive the Newsletter by U.S. mail.

**CenCal** (Central California Council of Diving Clubs) dues are **\$15.00** and USofA (Underwater Society of America) dues are **\$30.00**. (Pay online at: [www.cencal.org](http://www.cencal.org)). These optional dues support the many efforts of CenCal and USofA on behalf of all divers in the areas of beach access along with conservation and state and national legislation.

A summary of annual dues are:

CLUB DUES	\$ 50.00
Newsletter (U.S. Mail)	10.00
Optional: CEN CAL	15.00
Optional: USofA	30.00

Remember, associate member (non-diving spouses of Dippers) dues are **\$5.00**. Associate members may attend Dipper functions at member prices, but have no voting privileges.

**Late dues incur a late fee of \$5.00** ☆

## How about a New Year Resolution? Set a goal to get your stars in 2026!

### STAR ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM AWARD REQUIREMENTS

*Jackie Gardner*

Ever notice some Club members with Gold Stars on the back of their jackets? Here's how to get yours! These achievements may be accomplished and recorded in any order. Stars will be awarded in numerical order upon completion of all previous requirements. It is the Club member's responsibility to make sure these accomplishments are recorded with the Star Achievement Program Chairperson. Chances are, you already qualify for your first or second 'Star' and don't know it. Review the list below – and you're on your way! Then contact **Jackie Gardner**, phone: 408-274-9447, email: [tomandjackieus@yahoo.com](mailto:tomandjackieus@yahoo.com), and start your collection of stars.

#### 1st STAR AWARD ☆

1. Show SCUBA certification from a nationally recognized certification agency.
2. Log ten (10) dives with the Club.
3. Dive to 60 feet in the ocean on a Club dive.

#### 2nd STAR AWARD ☆ ☆

1. Log 20 total dives (not necessarily Club dives).
2. Have current CPR AND First Aid certification.
3. Coordinate two (2) scheduled Club dives.
4. Assist at two (2) scheduled Club activities.
5. Prove ability to use a compass by showing proof of: a) Navigation Specialty, OR b) Advanced Diver certification.

#### 3rd STAR AWARD ☆ ☆ ☆

1. Obtain a Scuba Rescue course certification from a nationally recognized certification agency.
2. Complete one (1) year as an active skin and SCUBA diver AND Club member.
3. Complete at least one (1) of the following: a) assist at four (4) club activities, b) coordinate four (4) scheduled Club dives, OR c) dive with four (4) prospective Club members.
4. Have current CPR AND First Aid certification.
5. Show certification of one (1) of the following courses: a) O2 Provider, b) Nitrox, OR c) Advanced Diver.

#### 4th STAR AWARD ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

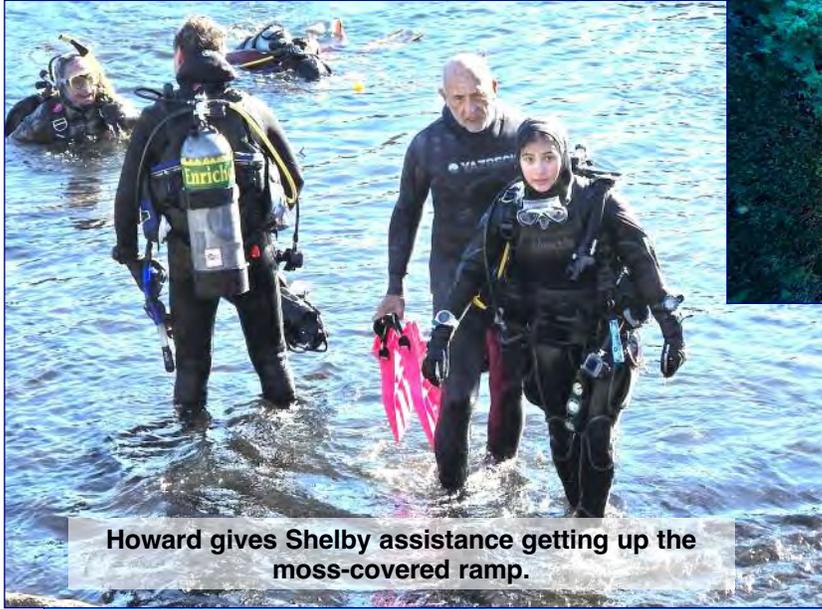
1. Complete two (2) years as an active skin and SCUBA diver AND Club member.
2. Log at least two (2) night dives.
3. Serve as a Club Committee Chair, OR participate in at least two (2) different ocean/dive-related public services.
4. Have current CPR, First Aid AND Scuba Rescue certification.
5. Coordinate the following scheduled Club dives: a) one (1) boat dive, b) ~~one (1) abalone dive~~, AND c) one (1) night dive.
6. Dive with at least six (6) prospective Club members.

#### 5th STAR AWARD ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

1. Successfully complete all previous requirements.
2. Complete three (3) years as an active skin and SCUBA diver AND Club member.
3. Have current CPR, First Aid AND Scuba Rescue certification.
4. Be a nationally certified: a) SCUBA Instructor, b) Assistant Instructor, c) Dive Master, d) Master Scuba Diver, OR e) serve one (1) year as a Club Officer.

# It's hit or miss diving in December. This year was a HIT!

Photos by Tom Earl, Ken and Jing Ye Agur



Howard gives Shelby assistance getting up the moss-covered ramp.



Tom Earl led a group of divers to see the 'Lone Metridium and the 'Hole-in-the Wall.'

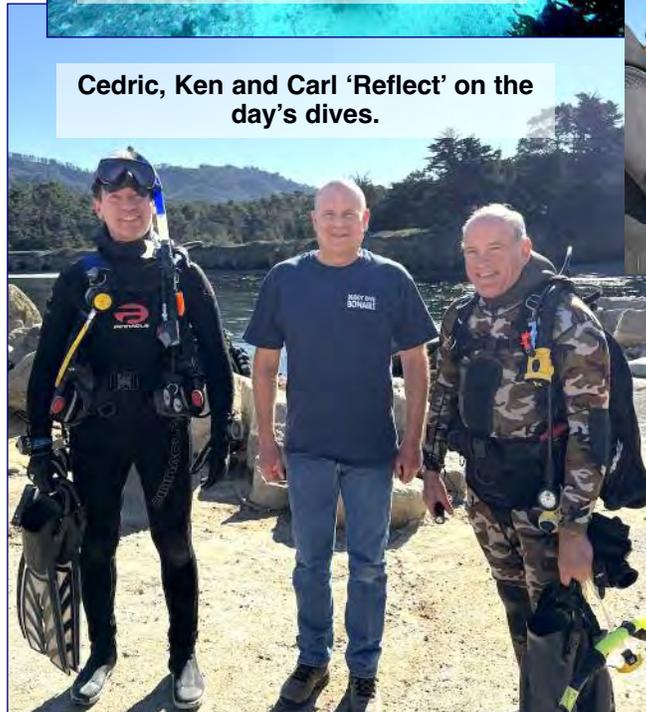


Shelby, left and Eva make their way between kelp stalks.



Howard shows his GoPro video of 'Sharky.'

Howard and Donovan found a leopard shark during their 1st dive. Everyone wanted to look for it for the 2nd dive, but 'Sharky' had other plans and wasn't seen.



Cedric, Ken and Carl 'Reflect' on the day's dives.



Eva, Emily and Shelby enjoy the sunny day.

## December Christmas General Meeting – Raffle Winners!



**2 Times a Winner! Sim Upadhyayula** won the \$50 cash and the \$30 cash off the Christmas tree at the December General Meeting raffle. Did we mention he drew his own ticket for the second win? His luck ran out when he didn't win the \$1.7 Billion Power Ball Lottery. 🍀



**Ophelia Drake** scored \$20 cash off the tree.



**Eva Alexander** took a bottle of champagne.



**Lucy Yen** got lucky.



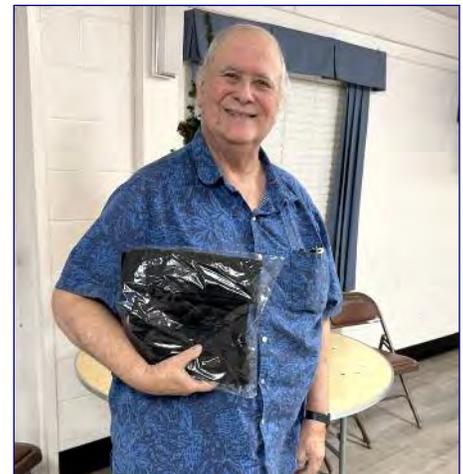
**Eva Alexander** took another bottle of champagne.



**Howard Chien** is a Pockyman!



**Howard Timoney** isn't sure what a carpenter is going to do with a electric extension cord.



**Kelly Drake** scored dive gear.



*"We'll go blind looking into the Sun!"*

**Sim, Tom, Howard, Eva, Grace and Alexandria take the required 'Selfie' photo**

## **December 13th S3 Reports**

### **Dive #1 Report – Sim Upadhyayula**

With good conditions and better visibility reported the previous few days, the team of six intrepid divers including **Howard Timoney, Grace Chi, Eva Alexander, Tom Earl, Alexandria Haraszti** and yours truly, decided to meet up at the preschool at North Monastery Beach. The conditions were so mellow that Grace made the unanimous decision to dive the site and she was already setting up her gear before others pulled into the parking lot. This saved us all a walk down to the beach to check out the conditions, thank you Grace.

There was a little confusion for the newer diver Alexandria to find the dive group but all was well and we started the dive around 9 AM.

With Howard leading the group, we headed to a depth of 95 feet. The visibility was good 60-70 feet and water temperature was balmy 58 degrees F. Tom brought out his insta360 camera on the dive and was toddling along while Howard and I were on a mission to live up to the Club President's gold standard. Sometimes, chilling has its own rewards. Surely, Tom and the rest of the gang were treated to a sight of a bunch of Mola Mola's getting "the works" – full service washing/waxing by the smaller fish. Fortunately, Tom had it all captured on his camera and shared the finely edited YouTube video with the entire group later.

The dive lasted about 50 minutes and surprisingly the exit was super easy without any of the dreaded Monastery Beach crawl.

### **Dive #2 Report – Grace Chi**

The first dive went so well that for the second dive, we repeated the route from the first dive. Mola Molas appeared intermittently throughout the dive and there were several large lingcods. A 5-ft shark, potentially a silky, was spotted for a few seconds near the bottom. Visibility and water temperature was similar to the first dive. Some of the best dives in a long time. And as the saying goes, "You Should Have Been There!" 🌟

## **Pirates of the Caribbean's Black Pearl gets new starring role as an artificial reef**

**Mark Evans – Scuba News**

The infamous Black Pearl, this one built as a steel-hulled prop for *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest*, has been sunk as an artificial reef in nearly 22m of water off the coast of Panama City Beach, Fla. The 30-metre vessel, which looks a little different now to the instantly recognizable pirate ship in the movies, was sent to the bottom about six nautical miles southwest of St Andrews Pass, joining a veritable fleet of some 800 purpose-sunk ships.

It was sunk with the assistance of students from Tom P Haney Technical College, who welded steel flags, cannons, ship's wheel, treasure chest and more 'booty' to the vessel to give it more of a pirate-feel. Visit PCB Artificial Reef Co-ordinator and Resource Manager Erin Graham commented: "This is going to be a great dive opportunity for people – it's a very safe, easy swim with a shallow depth. "This was designated for a movie prop, so it did not have a lot of the grease buildup, the engine, the fuel, everything that is required to remove for artificial reefs. So this was a prime artificial reef vessel." 🌟



Photo credit: Tom P Haney, Technical College

## **The Idiocy Continues**

*Undercurrent*

First, it was graffiti scrawled on corals in Balicasag, Philippines, in 2023, and more off Pangalao last year. But the bad publicity didn't stop another idiot from carving Just Dive in table coral off Napaling Point, a popular dive site southwest of Bohol.

Bohol's governor has ordered the dive site closed while an investigation takes place. The culprit faces fines and imprisonment. PS: With a bit of help from Chat GPT, we learned there is a scuba tour service named Just Dive in Cebu City, 45 miles away, a good place for the investigators to start. 🌟



## **Humpback Whale Killed by Australian Ghost Fishing Gear**

*Undercurrent*

It's not unusual for whales to get hung up in fishing gear and subsequently drown, but when the remains are captured with a photograph, people take notice. On October 15, Ollie Clarke, an award-winning underwater photographer and marine biologist, discovered and photographed a humpback's skeleton off the coast of Western Australia. "It's hard to put into words what it was like diving on this skeleton, surrounded by the echoing calls of singing whales," he wrote on Instagram. "Harrowing, yet strangely beautiful." The whale had become entangled in discarded fishing gear. (BBC Wildlife Magazine) 🌟

# DIVE & ACTIVITY CALENDAR

SIM UPADHYAYULA

www.SJFLIPPERDIPPERS.COM

JANUARY 2026

**SATURDAY JANUARY 3  
NO SCHEDULED DIVE**

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7**

**BUSINESS MEETING: 7:30pm**  
The meeting will be held **virtually via Microsoft Teams**. Watch for an email with details. Bring your own food, drinks, and internet connection and we'll discuss ideas for upcoming dives and events.

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 10  
SECOND SATURDAY SCUBA (S3)  
DIVE: LOCATION TBD**

Join the Flipper Dippers for this month's S3 dive coordinated by **Sim Upadhyayula**. Text: 669-286-9796 or email: toytacous@yahoo.com. Bring 2 tanks and plan on going for lunch after the dive. Location will be determined (TBD) based on conditions. Be sure to contact Sim if you want to join in.

**SATURDAY JANUARY 17  
NO SCHEDULED DIVE**

## **GENERAL MEETING WEDNESDAY, JAN 21**

The **in-person General Meeting** held at **7:30 PM** at the Knights of Columbus Santa Maria Hall 2211 Shamrock Dr., Campbell.  
The **virtual meeting** held via Microsoft Teams. Watch your email for info.

Please contact **Carl Tuttle** for more details on the in-person meeting or a link to the virtual MS Teams meeting.

### **Celebrate 61 Years of the San Jose Flipper Dippers!**

Entertainment:

- **Social Hour**
- **Sign-ups for Monthly Dives**



**SATURDAY, JANUARY 24  
NO SCHEDULED DIVE**

How about YOU leading a dive? Contact **Sim Upadhyayula**. Text: 669-286-9796 or email: toytacous@yahoo.com so he can get the word out.

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28  
ANNUAL PLANNING MEETING**

Annual meeting to plan the Club's calendar for the coming year. Meeting will be held **virtually** via the MS Teams link used for business and general meetings. You are encouraged to join in and share your ideas for dives and other Club events. All new and continuing officers and committee heads should plan to attend. The meeting will be held virtually and will begin promptly at 7:30 pm. Please contact **Carl Tuttle** if you need the link and a copy of the 2026 preliminary calendar

**SATURDAY JANUARY 31  
NO SCHEDULED DIVE**



### **FEBRUARY 2026**

- 4 Business Meeting
- 14 Second Saturday SCUBA (S3)
- 18 **General Meeting**



## **California extends abalone harvesting ban until 2036**

The California Fish and Game Commission voted Thursday, December 11, 2025, to extend the ban on abalone harvesting in Northern California until 2036, citing the decline in red abalone populations and ongoing environmental challenges.

This is the longest extension for this ban since the initial 2018 closure.

"Monterey Abalone Company is one of only two abalone farms left on the California coast. The farm caters to a small number of walk-up clientele and white tablecloth restaurants, where a plate of two or three red abalone might go anywhere from \$56 to \$80 dollars. Today, farms offer the only legal way to eat Californian abalone," reported the San Francisco Chronicle. ★

## **California Dept. of Fish and Wildlife Report**

During recent minus tides along the Sonoma Coast, two wildlife officers spotted lights down at Ocean Cove — the kind of lights that usually mean someone is doing more than sightseeing.



From a distance, the officers watched several individuals moving through the cove and placing items into containers. When the group eventually made its way back up the access road, the officers positioned themselves out of sight and waited. One individual carrying a bag was contacted. Inside the bag? 15 poached red abalone.

He was detained while officers checked the rest of the group. No additional arrests were made, but the individual in possession of the abalone was transported to the Sonoma County Detention Facility and booked for taking and possessing abalone with intent to sell. A report will be filed

with the Sonoma County District Attorney's Office.

Due to dwindling abalone numbers and environmental stressors, take of all abalone species is closed throughout California. ★



**NOTE:** All certified divers are encouraged to attend San Jose Flipper Dippers' dives.

Non-Club members will be required to show proof of certification to the dive coordinator prior to entering the water with our group. Please sign up for dives at the General Meeting or call the coordinator. This is needed in case of cancellation or changes.



# San Jose Flipper Dippers

c/o 1108 Sunset Landing  
Rio Vista, CA 94571-5148



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## 2026 COMING EVENTS

Jan 7	Business Meeting
Jan 10	Second Saturday SCUBA
Jan 21	☛ General Meeting
Jan 28	Annual Planning Meeting
Feb 4	Business Meeting
Feb 14	Second Saturday SCUBA
Feb 18	☛ General Meeting
Mar 1	Labor Day Weekend Reservations (Aug 31-Sept 2, 2026) Van Damme
Mar 4	Business Meeting
Mar 14	Second Saturday SCUBA
Mar 18	☛ General Meeting

*Are you looking for someone  
to dive with?*

The San Jose Flipper Dippers Dive Club is  
a great way to meet divers who are  
always having fun times. **Come join us!**



Watch This Space – Much More To Come!  
See the Club's Website for the full Calendar



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