

DIVER DOWN NEWS

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE DIVE CLUB

President's Letter – January 2026

Hello everyone, and happy New Year!

I hope you all enjoyed the holidays and are feeling ready to kick off another year of dive club adventures.

We rang in 2026 with our annual New Year's Day dive at Stehli Beach... or at least we intended to. While the wind and freezing temperatures convinced most of us to stay dry, we still had a great time having breakfast on the beach and welcoming the new year together. A huge shout-out goes to Alex, our lone brave soul, who took the full polar plunge and earned bragging rights for the year ahead.

Looking forward, we're excited to announce a brand-new club contest for 2026: "Where in the World Is the Dive Club?" Members are encouraged to bring their dive club swag (T-shirts, sweatshirts, hats) along on dive trips throughout the year and snap a photo while wearing it. Send your photos in, and at the end of the year, the member who has traveled the farthest distance from Bay Shore will win a prize.

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, January 6, and we're excited to welcome special guest speaker Abby Jordan, a climate science educator.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at the meeting and to another great year of diving!

~Courtney Lyons, President



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January 2026
Volume 37, Issue 1

MONTHLY MEETING

The Dive Club holds monthly meetings monthly on the first Tuesdays.
Location: The Tap Room in Bayshore

EST ★ 2011

TAP ROOM

Support our host and wait staff. Additional “Event Gratuity” on each bill.

And don't forget cash for our 50/50 raffle!

Arrive for dinner as early as 6:30pm. Meetings commence at 8pm.



January 6, 2026

The Dive Club presents

Abby Jordan

Climate Science Educator and Climate-Ed Program Manager at the National Wildlife Federation

A Brooklyn native shaped by Hurricane Sandy, Abby turned trauma into action by restoring coastlines, teaching students, and building resilience.

Hear her story of healing, ocean swimming, and empowering the next generation.





MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

The Club Membership year is January 1 to December 31, and each year club members must fill out an application form and waiver specific to that year along with submitting annual dues. Forms must be filled out and submitted for your safety as well as the Dive Club's and are necessary to participate in our club dives and activities. These forms and timely payment of your dues keep you in good and active standing with the club.

Enjoy a \$5 discount on dues for forms submitted with payment by or before start of meeting on January 6, 2026.

TDC APPLICATION INFO & INSTRUCTIONS

Fill out the application, which is available for download on the The Dive Club's webpage (thediveclub.com/membership) and at the back of this newsletter. Please fill out the application on your computer, print to sign, and then scan and email to Bill Cadden (below).

If filling out by hand, please use **black ink** and write legibly. If scanning it in via phone, please crop out any areas that are not part of the forms (aka the surface from which you took the image).

ALL SIGNATURES MUST BE HAND SIGNED, NO ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES ACCEPTED.

The application consists of the Data Sheet, Waiver, and Membership Directory (4 pages total)

The Data Sheet keeps your information current and updated, including emergency contacts (who should be someone other than your typical dive buddy). The waivers is needed for safety and protection year over year. Finally, the Directory sheet is to add you to our membership directory and keep that fresh as well.

For Family Memberships, EACH PERSON IN THE FAMILY UNIT needs to fill out a Form and Sign it. Print out the form so you can sign **ALL Pages**, and **Initial the Waiver** where indicated. **PARENTS**, you must sign the Waiver for your Children under the age of 18. **No Digital Signatures please.**

When you sign the Waiver, PLEASE DATE IT January 1 of the waiver year.

Scan the pages and save as a *.pdf, using your Last Name for the File Name (ex: Cadden.pdf), and email it to Corresponding Secretary, Bill Cadden at Membership.Thediveclub@GMail.com

Individual memberships for 2026 are \$25. Family memberships are \$35.

You can **Pay your Dues** by one of 3 ways:

1. Pay Cash at the meeting or if you run into an Officer (President, Vice-President, Treasurer, or Corresponding Secretary).
* If you use a Business Check, make sure you include a note telling us who it is for.
* If your Family Unit has multiple Last Names, please let us know who is included.
2. Pay by Check, either at a Meeting, to an Officer, or via mail to the P.O. Box.
* If you need Venmo directions, please contact the Treasurer at info@thediveclub.com.
* If your Family Unit has multiple Last Names, please let us know who is included.
3. Venmo to the Treasurer, Gus Bricker.
* If you need Venmo directions, please contact the Treasurer at info@thediveclub.com.
* If your Family Unit has multiple Last Names, please let us know who is included.



MEETING MINUTES

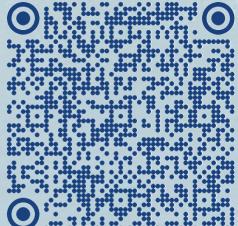
NOVEMBER 4, 2025

RECORDED BY NORMA LEON

- November minutes approved
- Have yet to receive nominations yet for board positions in 2026. They are currently as follows:
 - President: Courtney Lyons,
 - VP: John Bernsten,
 - Treasurer: Gus Bricker,
 - Recording Secretary: Norma Leon
 - Corresponding Secretary: Bill Cadden
 - Anyone willing to nominate themselves or their candidate, the floor was open to do so. The results were that the current board ran unopposed and was congratulated for staying on for 2026.
- On Saturday, December 6th is the Holiday Party at Gus Bricker's home @ 51 Maple Ave., Bay Shore. Starts at 6:30P. Dinner, soda and water will be provided. If anyone would like to bring an appetizer or dessert or drinks, they are free to do so. All family was welcome. RSVP to Courtney if coming so a general headcount can be made. Club doesn't provide alcohol.
- New Members introduced and welcomed:
 - Teddy and Kevin Bacon, Boy Scouts with Bruce. 10 yrs previous they went down to the sea base with Bruce. Noticed some familiar faces, including Teddy's dive instructor and the owner of Port Diver's.
 - Tim and son Christopher Matos, also from the scouts. Tim is certified, but hasn't been out in a long time. Son interested in diving.
- This following Saturday, December 13, 2025 is the Port Diver Christmas Party sponsored by the owners: Joyce and Greg who are always very welcoming to the club and they invited us all to join them. The party is at the shop in Port Jefferson. All welcome to attend. Starts at 3PM
- January 1st is the New Year's Day Dive at Stelhi Beach in Bayville at 11AM with Breakfast, refreshments, etc. In the past people have decided to do a Polar Plunge instead of a dive. So bring your bathing suit or you can just come down and hang out for some bubble watching.
- January speaker is Abby Jordan, who is a Climate Science Educator
- February speaker we will be Chris Peparo of Fish Guy Photos.



MINUTES (CONT'D)



- ☞ Speakers needed after February. Recommend and Courtney → will reach out to them. Use QR to right to fill out Speaker form.
- ☞ Bill Cadden with Membership Renewals: one month to go before all dues and paperwork should be in. Dues will go up by \$5 on January 1st.* Fair number of renewals so far, but still lagging behind where we should be. Forms are on the website. Download them, fill them out, send them in.
- ☞ Barry Lipsky regarding LIDA contest he brought up to us a few months ago involving the booklet he handed out: no one filled it out, so LIDA gets to keep the \$250 fins that were donated. Booklet was originated by Gus Bricker. Different dive sites, dive boats. You would experience that dive and fill it out like a log book and as a contest the person who filled out the most would win a prize. Possibly a winner next year. Chris, Jim, and Robert all represent LIDA.
- ☞ Linda Brown is collecting winter clothing for a drive mentioned via email. Donations can be given to her tonight or get in touch with her later.
- ☞ Linda Gotti spoke about her trip to Bonaire. It is still on with 14 people going roughly about \$1500, May 2nd to May 9th, 2026. Another dive via inflatable will be added for the other side that is more remote. Every room comes with a car, breakfast daily, unlimited Nitrox, and unlimited shore diving, minus airfare. If anyone else wants to go we need to know ASAP. Mostly everybody going has paid in 4 installments. Flights book out of Newark which were \$400 R/T direct. Usually other airports have stops with long layovers.
- ☞ Bring a piece of your dive club swag to wherever you are travel diving during 2026. Take a selfie of yourself in it at that destination and then we will collect it. In about a year from now, Courtney will go through the pictures and see how many miles everybody has traveled. Whoever has traveled the farthest wins a prize next year. If you have no swag, let Courtney know and she will get you something with the logo to bring. One question raised: will it be per trip or how many miles in the year? Will be answered at January meeting.
- ☞ 50/50 tickets still on sale.
- ☞ Don't forget to settle your tabs before you leave the Tap Room...

**According to the email sent by Bill on January 1st, the discount remains until before the start of the January meeting. Once it begins, the discount will removed and dues will be full price.*





NEW CONTEST

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS THE DIVE CLUB?

Dive Club Travel Contest/Challenge Instructions

1. Pack Your Dive Club Swag:

- Bring a piece of your dive club swag with you on any 2026 dive trips.

2. Take a Selfie:

- Snap a selfie of you wearing or displaying your swag at each destination.

3. Share Your Photos:

- Once you have your selfies, collect them for submission.

4. Tracking Miles:

- At the end of the year, Courtney will review all submitted photos to calculate how many miles each member has traveled.

5. Win a Prize:

- The member who has traveled the farthest will win a prize next year!

6. No Swag? No Problem:

- If you don't have any swag, reach out to Courtney. She will arrange to get you a piece with the club logo.

Participate and showcase your travels while representing our dive club!

First Contest submission:
Jake Griffin

Location: Poor Knights Islands
Marine Reserve, New Zealand

Distance traveled: 8,800 miles





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NEW YEARS DIVE

January 1 - Stehli Beach, Bayville - 11:00AM

Unfortunately, conditions were too rough for diving, but there was one brave plunger: Alex. Better luck next year, but thank you to all who came out to support the Club for this longstanding winter tradition.



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

↓ Jan. 1, 2026 - New Years Dive



Bob Auteri
Dennis Boucher
Stephen Burton
Julie Terri Cohen
Michael Feldbaum
Sam Feldbaum
Gavin Fontana
Carl Brett Friedman
George Garfagona
Jeannine Jennette
Brian Lemke

Norma Leon
Courtney Lyons
Matt Marschhauser
Denis Mellett
Stephanie A Miller
Philip O'Sullivan
Ron Prybella
Kristen Lee
Ruggiero
John Schwedes
Katy Schwedes
Alicia Sirois
Ryan Smith



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2026 LEADERSHIP



President:
Courtney Lyons



Vice President:
John Berntsen



Treasurer:
Gus Bricker



Recording Secretary:
Norma Leon



Corresponding Secretary:
Bill Cadden



Wreck Diving:
[Vacant]



Beach Diving:
Courtney Lyons &
Martin



Oak Beach:
John Bernsten &
Eric Cregren



Camping Trips:
Bruce Russo



T-Shirts & Swag:
[Vacant]



Website:
Jim Vafeas



Social Media:
Jerry Kinkade



Newsletter:
Randi
Hochenberger

APPLICATION DATA SHEET

Name: _____ Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Emergency Contact: Name: _____ Telephone: _____ Relationship: _____

Level of Certification: _____ Certifying Agency: _____ Date of Certification: _____

Student Yes No Years Diving: _____ Approx. Number of Dives made: _____ Deepest Dive to date: _____Have you ever made a planned decompression dive? Yes NoWhat are your diving interests? Wreck Diving Shore Diving U/W Photography Deep Diving
(Check all that apply) Spear Fishing Night Diving Artifact Collecting Travel/Vacation
 Environmental IssuesAre you First Aid/CPR certified? Yes NoAre you interested in furthering your present level of certification? Yes No

What are you looking for in a dive club? _____

Would you be interested in participating in club committees? Yes NoWhen are you available for club dives/activities? (Check all that apply): days nights weekendsDo you have Dive Accident Insurance (DAN or other)? Yes NoAre you a member of any other dive clubs? Yes No If so, which ones? _____**Membership Type:** Please check New Renewal Single Membership: \$25.00. Full club membership Family Membership: \$35.00. Full Club membership for the person signing up, plus Partner and all children 26 years old and under.**Disclaimer:**

I understand that if accepted for membership in The Dive Club, I will be bound by the by-laws of The Dive Club and will be required to sign a waiver of liability and pay the applicable admission fee.

Signature of applicant: _____ Date: _____

Approved by:

Signature/Title of Club officer: _____ Date: _____



LIABILITY RELEASE AND EXPRESS ASSUMPTION OF RISK

This is an important legal document. You may wish to consult an attorney prior to signing it.

This release may be used against you in a court of law if you sue any released person or party.

Please read carefully, **fill in all blanks and initial each paragraph before signing**. Incomplete forms will not be accepted.

I, _____, hereby affirm that I have been advised and thoroughly informed through my open water training of the inherent risks of skin and scuba diving.

- Further, I understand that diving with compressed air involves certain inherent risks; decompression sickness, embolism, or other hyperbaric injuries can occur that require treatment in a recompression chamber. I further understand that any trips of any kind (diving or non-diving), whether sponsored or not, by The Dive Club may be conducted at a site that is remote, either by time or distance or both, from such a recompression chamber. I still choose to proceed with such diving activities in spite of the absence of a recompression chamber in proximity to the dive site(s).
- I understand and agree that neither The Dive Club or any of their respective board members, officers, agents or assigns (hereinafter referred to as "Released Parties"), may be held liable or responsible in any way for any injury, death, or other damages to me or my family, heirs, or assigns that may occur as a result of my participation in any Dive Club activity, or as a result of negligence of any party, including the Released Parties, whether passive or active.
- In Consideration of being allowed to become a member of The Dive Club I hereby personally assume all risks in connection with diving or non-diving activity from any harm, injury or damage that may befall on me, including all risks connected therewith, whether foreseen or unforeseen.
- I further save and hold harmless said Dive Club and Released Parties from any claim or lawsuit by me, my family, estate, heirs, or assigns, arising out of my enrollment and participation in Club events including both claims arising during said event or after said event.
- I further understand that skin diving and scuba diving are physically strenuous activities and that I will be exerting myself during any diving activity, and that if I am injured as a result of a heart attack, panic, hyperventilation, etc., that I expressly assume the risk of said injuries and that I will not hold the above listed individuals or companies responsible for the same.
- I further state that I am of lawful age and legally competent to sign this liability release, or that I have acquired the written consent of my parent or guardian.
- I acknowledge scuba diving is an activity that is done with a buddy. I will not make a solo dive during a Dive Club event unless I am certified to do so by an accredited training agency and I am equipped to make this dive safely.
- I understand that the terms herein are contractual and are not a mere recital, and that I have signed this document of my own free act.
- I acknowledge that The Dive Club does not provide buddies, gear, transportation, training, or professional advice pertaining to the sport of scuba diving. However, the dive sponsors will do their best to help club members find what they need for a dive by setting up email groups to allow individual club members to coordinate rides, buddies, and rental gear, if necessary.
- The Dive Club does not vet divers or make any determination about whether any diver is qualified to do any given dive. This decision is entirely up to the individual diver, as well as any external dive operator, such as a dive boat captain or resort operator. It is important to evaluate your current experience when making the decision to dive. If you only have experience diving in warm waters with optimal visibility, you should consider the additional challenges associated with northeast diving before making your decision. I expressly assume the risk of any injury or illness for **each and every** dive that I determine to make and hold harmless for the same the above listed companies and individuals.



- I acknowledge that for planned boat charters, the minimum certification and equipment requirements listed in our newsletter are the requirements of the boat captains. Please contact them directly if you have any questions about the suitability of a dive for you.
- I understand that DAN (Divers Alert Network) Insurance or other similar diving accident insurance policies are available to me if I choose to acquire this. I acknowledge that it is my own responsibility to educate myself on the available policies and choose the one, if any, that is appropriate for me. I understand that without this, I will be responsible for any medical bills or damages to my equipment that I incur.
- I recognize that I may receive false or misleading information from one or more club members or non-members pertaining to the relative difficulty of a dive or my ability to safely participate in or perform a dive. Additionally, I acknowledge that one or more club members or non-members may negligently approve of my dive plan, including preparation or intended dive plan, the condition of my equipment, my ability to use my equipment, or proper use of equipment. I understand and agree that **I am responsible for determining whether I am capable of executing** a dive safely, whether I have sufficient information regarding my own physical abilities and the intended dive to base this decision, as well as whether my equipment is in proper working condition and is sufficient for the intended dive. I release The Dive Club and all co-signers who by signing this waiver similarly release me from negligent acts or omissions of this nature.

IT IS THE INTENTION OF _____ BY THIS INSTRUMENT TO EXEMPT AND RELEASE THE DIVE CLUB, AND ALL RELATED ENTITIES AS DEFINED ABOVE, FROM ALL LIABILITY OR RESPONSIBILITY WHATSOEVER FOR PERSONAL INJURY, PROPERTY DAMAGE OR WRONGFUL DEATH HOWEVER CAUSED, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE RELEASED PARTIES, WHETHER PASSIVE OR ACTIVE.

I HAVE FULLY INFORMED MYSELF OF THE CONTENTS OF THIS LIABILITY RELEASE AND EXPRESS ASSUMPTION OF RISK BY READING IT BEFORE I SIGNED IT ON BEHALF OF MYSELF AND MY HEIRS.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date

Reviewed by Club Officer

Date



Membership Directory Data Sheet

First Name _____

Last Name _____

Telephone Number _____

E-Mail Address _____

I wish to have the above information published in the 2025 Membership Directory to be distributed to the Membership.

Signature of Member _____

Date _____

