



# UNDERCURRENTS

Newsletter of the Bluegrass Dive Club / [www.bluegrassdiveclub.com](http://www.bluegrassdiveclub.com)

January 2026

Volume 56, Number 01

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## Calendar

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**Date:** Tuesday, January 13

**Time:** 7:30-PM (business)  
Social at 7:00

**Location:** Roosters

**Program:** Primer On Hyperbaric  
Medicine with "Doc" McGrady

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## President's Message

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*By Kathryn Bowers*



2026 is promising to be an interesting year!

I'm very excited about our new group of officers and the prospects for improving and growing our club.

The stated purpose of our club is: "to cultivate interest in the sports of skin, SCUBA diving, and snorkeling, and to promote social fellowship among those who share such interests by arranging group trips and other social activities for the mutual benefit and enjoyment of its members." That's it. We are a social club for divers and people interested in SCUBA or any of the sports of "looking at stuff underwater".. Our meetings are open to all members and interested non-members so if

you know someone who's currently just SCUBA curious, bring them along. I won't promise we won't try to "suck them in", we are after all in a position to be the perfect gateway... A couple hours of a Tuesday night is a pretty low risk cost for what could become a lifetime passion.

Your new board has a group of very fired up individuals! I think you can look forward to some very informative and interesting meetings. They all have a true love and passion for diving. We may not share all those passions, I for one, will not be joining Doc and Butch in dry suit diving! But I am really interested in hearing about it and seeing the fabulous pictures.

In the one meeting we have had (which was supposed to be a Budget Planning Meeting) I heard all kinds of brainstorming about new ideas and plans. Bringing back more local diving. Some lower cost trips that will allow newer drivers to join us. Remember, local doesn't have to mean in Kentucky. There are lots of fairly fabulous dives right here in the good old USA.

Some of us may also be pining for more exotic destinations.

This is the year to think about where you really want to go and make a suggestion. I'll go first! There will be a TOTAL ECLIPSE OF THE SUN, Monday August 2, 2027 and Luxor Egypt happens to be in the path of totality. Alex told me aggressor has a liveaboard that will be in the red sea very close to that. It also has a land component. I can go back to Cairo and see that new museum. Yeah, it's 2027, and it's probably

going to be expensive but, (see item 1, I have till 2027 to save) but some things take a while to plan. So, search the back of your brain and see what's been hibernating back there. Where do you really wanna go? Now is the time to let us know. Bigger trips require a little more planning, all the more reason to use your resources. We have some really talented ladies who can help, we can start looking into the feasibility of making that dream become a reality. 🚩

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## The Editor's Notes

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*By Scott Newby*



My name is Scott and I'm a dive junkie! I'm married to Angie who loves going to sunny tropical locales so I guess you can call her my enabler. I learned to dive in the 80's but soon stopped. Fast forward to 2014, I got back into it thanks to Angie and have been pursuing that high (or low) ever since. We're so happy to be joining in the club and I look forward to serving you as the newsletter editor. As I was trying to prepare for this task I noticed the Newsletter tab on our website. Go there and check it out! Years of photos and news to either learn where the club came from, or just a stroll down memory lane...It's a fun place to go. 🚩



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## Vice President Report

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I am Butch Mellott

I am a retired HVAC contractor. I have been diving since 2017. I am a Dive Master with SSI and PADI. I am a First Aid Instructor trainer with DAN. I enjoy all facets of diving from local to international, reef to wreck and cavern. I wish to share those experiences with others, learning more and assisting others in doing the same. I am looking forward to being involved in the BGDC and reaching out to others. 🚩

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## Trip Director Report

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*By Priscilla Mellott*



My name is Priscilla Mellott. I am the Trip Director for 2026. I'm married to Butch Mellott. We have 3 children, 5 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren. I am recently retired (except 1 day a month, lol). I worked as a surgeon technician from 2000 - current. Although I am not a scuba diver, I do enjoy traveling and a little snorkeling. I look forward to setting up trips that meet everyone's expectations. Please reach out to me if you have any suggestions or advice. 🚩

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## Secretary's Report

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*By David Carr*

I am pleased to serve BGDC as secretary. My wife, Carol, and I have been recreational divers since 2012. We have almost exclusively dove in the Caribbean but a recent trip to Indonesia has enticed us to return there. In addition to enjoying diving myself I particularly enjoy seeing new divers experience the freedom, beauty, and control of SCUBA.

I retired from a 40-year career as a physical therapist in 2022. I specialized in Electrophysiologic Physical Therapy for 25 of those years. Retirement seems busier than work life. My time is occupied by grandchildren, travel, church, making and fixing things as a hopeless do-it-yourselfer; houses and cars primarily.

I look forward to helping to grow the club and enjoy diving and travel with fellow divers and friends. 🚩

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## From the Treasurer

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*By Dan Miller*



New Member/Diver, First Year	<b>\$10.00</b>
<b>2025 Membership Renewal</b>	<b>\$20.00</b>
Student with ID	
Single & Family (1 diver)	
Family (non divers)	
Family (2 or more divers)	

**Renewal:** Please send payment to the address listed below, please make sure there is a correct indication of your mailing

address, phone number and it is very important to indicate an email address.

Or use this link for [Online Payments](#)

### **Contact / Mail to:**

Bluegrass Dive Club, Inc.  
c/o Dan Miller  
824 Gunpowder Drive  
Lexington, KY 40509

**New Members:** Visit the website to fill out an on-line form or to access a Microsoft Word printable form. [CLICK HERE](#). 🚩

### **A Short Story on one of Earth's Oldest Animals**

Sometimes, simple is better. Case in point are the starfish – more correctly known as sea stars. These simple animals lack eyes to see an approaching threat, have no brain to think their way out of danger, no means of defense, and they couldn't outrun a snail.

And yet, Sea Stars have survived for more than 450 million years, outlasting the dinosaurs and countless other species on both land and sea. A number of factors contribute to this admirable longevity, and some of the most important are also the most unusual. Here are some of the adaptations that have kept these simple animals around for a very long time.

### **A Heartless Creature**

If you cut a sea star, it won't bleed. Instead of a heart pumping blood through veins, their bodies are laced with an intricate network of canals that move water in and out. This natural hydraulic system is used to distribute nutrients, control movements of the arms and activate hundreds of small tentacle-like tube feet. They can turn off the internal pumps to go soft and squeeze into tight spaces, or increase the pressure to become rigid as a deterrent to would-be predators.

## They Have The Stomach For It

Some species of sea stars can go six months without a meal. When food is available it is passed through two stomachs. The cardiac stomach, which starts the digestion process, and the pyloric stomach which finishes the job. The unusual aspect of this arrangement is the sea star's ability to push the cardiac stomach out of its feeding orifice and attach it to prey to soften things up before swallowing. This talent is particularly useful for species that feed on clams. The sea star will create a suction with its tube feet to grasp and open the oyster shell, then extend and insert their cardiac stomach into the victim.

## A Growing Phenomenon

Should a toothy critter take a bite out of a sea star, it's usually not fatal, because sea stars can regrow missing body parts. This regenerative ability came as a surprise to fishermen who sought to rid their oyster beds of predatory sea stars by hacking them up and dumping the parts back overboard. Within a few months, the chopped-up stars regenerated, effectively quadrupling their numbers.

## No Partner, No Problem

Male and female sea stars usually make babies by external fertilization, which involves a coordinated release of eggs and sperm into the water. In the absence of a partner, they will sometimes engage in asexual reproduction. This is an act of duplication when the animal splits itself in two and regrows each half as two new organisms. Sea stars can also clone themselves from a single detached arm, which, over time will regenerate an entirely new body.

## Save the Stars

Sea stars have a long and admirable survival record, but many species now face unexpected threats from humans.

These animals are harvested for food in some parts of the world, killed and preserved as souvenirs and captured for the aquarium trade.

A less obvious but potentially lethal threat takes place each time a swimmer or snorkeler grabs a sea star for a photo op. Rapidly exposing the animal to air may cause asphyxiation and damage its skin. Divers and swimmers can do their small but important part in saving sea stars by simply following a "look but don't touch policy."

CREDIT

TO: **CARADONNA ADVENTURES**

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## Webmaster

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*By Alex Fassas*



[Tales from the Watery Web](#)

## Wishing You A Happy and Prosperous New Year

May your waters be warm, your currents mild, and the sea life healthy and abundant as you journey through the year 2026. But mostly, don't forget to invite along your diving friends to share the journey.

## Make This Your Dive Club

If you have an idea for a club program, activity, or travel, reach out to a club officer and share. There is a list of the officers in each newsletter, on our website, and via our [Contact Us](#) web form.

## DAN or Dive Assure Membership and Dive & Travel Insurance

Your club is a partner with both DAN

(Divers Alert Network) and Dive Assure for membership, dive accident, and travel insurance protection products. There is ZERO additional cost to YOU when you use our partner links to purchase their offerings. Your club will earn a commission on your purchase. Depending on where you live, your age, and the type of insurance you are interested in you may find that either of these organizations will be a better value, so shop and compare. Please carefully understand the coverages offered and read the fine print. Some only cover when traveling internationally, others only when you are beyond a radius of your primary residence; other coverages vary as well. The BGDC does not offer advice or recommendations so do your own research.

Divers Alert Network membership gives you access to purchase Dive Accident Insurance and Travel Insurance for either a single trip or an entire year.:

[DAN Membership and Renewal and Dive Accident Insurance](#)  
[DAN Trip Insurance](#)  
[DAN Annual Travel Insurance](#)

Dive Assure membership gives you access to purchase Dive Accident Insurance and Travel Insurance for either a single trip or an entire year:

[Dive Assure Membership & Insurance](#)

### **Do you have news or a program to share?**

Your dive club has a fabulous email list with which to share news and information that would be of interest to its members and friends. If you have something to share forward it along to

[webmaster@bluegrassdiveclub.com](mailto:webmaster@bluegrassdiveclub.com) or use the [Contact Us](#) web form. 🚩

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## **Safety Information Director**

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Bill 'Doc' Grady was born in North Carolina....straight out of high school, joined the Army as an Infantry Medic and fell in love with compressed bandages, blood and band-aids!.... Eventually finding himself in Medical school after the military.... Now works at Veteran Affairs Hospital as a toxic military exposure doctor. Found out about diving about 8 years ago with Travis Land and been scuba-ing since that time!!!

*Most intriguing dives around Papua New Guinea....*

*Marine Spirit-Mascot is Green Moray Eels...! Never passes us a pause near an eel...*

*Scuba superpower: able to get lost underwater in even a marked-lane Olympic pool on a bright day.... Careful if you follow those yellow -fins!!!! He's heading out into the Abyss or looking for a Green Moray Eel!!!*

*BDC-2026 Goals: teach underwater medicine and first-aid throughout the year..... Hopefully combination of hands-on and lots of lectures in bite sizes, about 20-30 mins and 10-12 slides at a pop.... 🚩*



# Bluegrass Dive Club 2026 Calendar

**January**

13, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting  
27, Tuesday E.C. Meeting

**February**

10, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting  
24, Tuesday E.C. Meeting

**March**

10, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting  
24, Tuesday E.C. Meeting

**April**

7, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting  
21, Tuesday E.C. Meeting

**May**

2, Saturday Club's Derby Party  
12, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting  
26, Tuesday E.C. Meeting

**June**

9, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting  
23, Tuesday E.C. Meeting

**July**

7, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting  
21, Tuesday E.C. Meeting

**August**

11, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting  
??, Saturday Club Pig Roast  
25, Tuesday E.C. Meeting

**September**

8, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting  
22, Tuesday E.C. Meeting

**October**

14, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting  
28, Tuesday E.C. Meeting

**November**

11, Tuesday Club Meeting (Elections)  
25, Tuesday E.C. Meeting

**December**

??, Saturday Christmas Party

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## 2026 BGDC Officer's

Kathryn Bowers, President	859 619-0166
Butch Mellott, Vice President	859 621-5160
David Carr, Secretary	859 585-5105
Dan Miller, Treasurer	859 948-5133
Priscilla Mellott, Trip Director	859 553-0739
Bill McGrady, Safety Info Dir.	713 259-9701
Alex Fassas, Webmaster	859 582-1600
Scott Newby, Newsletter	859 559-5105

