



UNDERCURRENTS

Newsletter of the Bluegrass Dive Club / www.bluegrassdiveclub.com

March 2026

Volume 56, Number 03

Quick Calendar

Meeting: Tuesday March 10 7:30
Where: Roosters on Richmond rd.

President's Message

By Kathryn Bowers



I simply cannot say enough about how impressed I am with our new dive planning committee! Priscilla and Lavon have done yeoman's work putting trips together. We had a marathon board meeting last week and were able to approve three club trips! You will hear about those at our next meeting and soon be able to see these posted to the club website. Compiling all the information necessary to get a trip approved is no small task. We have forms to assure that no crucial bits of information are overlooked, but it still entails quite a bit of going back-and-forth with the resort and our travel brokers. The Dive committee really went all out! Remember if you have somewhere you are looking at and planning on going talk to Priscilla, she can help you know what information the club needs and perhaps some of your dive club buddies would like to join you. Any of us can research and build the foundation of a trip. We have forms you can use as a guide for what information is needed. See you all soon at Roosters! 🚩

The Editor's Notes

By Scott Newby



Well, I never thought I'd be saying this but here it goes...I've been enjoying this new being the newsletter guy thing! I've knocked some of the rust off long unused computer skills. I may be still only using two fingers but it is faster than last month. Angie and I will still be gone for the March meeting but look forward to attending the April meeting in person.

If anyone has anything they would like to submit for our newsletter, it can be sent to newsletter@bluegrassdiveclub.com 🚩



Butch, Priscilla and Angie on Dominica trip 2025

Vice President Report

By Butch Mellott



Hello all,

Welcome to March and the promise of spring! This has been an unusually cold winter and we're all ready for warm weather. No new members this last month but I've been in touch with some who are interested. I understand we have some good trips coming up and more in the works. Thanks to everyone on the board for their due diligence and our trip leader and the committee for the hard work. I can tell you, because I live with her... it has not been easy. I am looking forward to getting together and diving together in the near future. Happy Bubbles.....

Into the water I go
To lose my mind
And find my soul.



Trip Director Report

By Priscilla Mellott



We have three (3) new trips scheduled for the Bluegrass Dive Club for 2026. We will go over the dates and all the information on Tuesday, March 10th at the dive club meeting.

We are also working on a couple of other trips. I will keep everyone updated as they progress.

There is a lot to discuss at the next meeting!



Secretary's Report

By David Carr



Bluegrass Dive Club –
Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday 2/26/26. 7:00pm – 9:30pm

Board Member attendees: Kathryn Bowers, Butch Mellott, Priscilla Mellott, Scott Newby, Alex Fassas, David, Carr. Absent: Bill McGrady

I. Kathryn Bowers called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and welcomed all members.

II. Past Agenda: Minutes have been amended by David Carr from previous comments from Priscilla Mellott. Reviewed and passed by verbal vote.

III. Financial Report: Dan Miller reviewed the financials (see written report). A highlight is that \$6,000.00 is currently set aside for upcoming trip deposits to be used prior to sign-ups.

IV. Remaining Officers and Directors Report

A. President: No new information

B. VP: No new report

D. Trip Director Report: Priscilla Mellott presented a very thorough vision of numerous trips coming up.

1. Belize: May 9-16, 2026 Quote has been received and there is not enough time to have signups and details ironed out.

Discussion: We could change date or interested members could book on their own. David mentioned that individuals could share information about trips booked outside the club. If this is the case members should get

Secretary's Report Cont.

Alex Fassas the information and he could put hyperlinks for others to consider the trip. Alex has a trip info format and will send to Priscilla. This will streamline the information that members receive about each trip.

2. Cayman Brac: 8/1-8/26.

\$2195 (dbl room) 3 dives/day

\$500 refundable dep. Until 5/15/26

Travel not included

\$200/21 drink pkg

\$170 nitrox (will be \$130 if 10 divers/group

There are 13 db. Rooms on hold. We can cancel them if not booked. (booked through CaraDonna?) 10% commission

Priscilla will call agent and clarify the commission details.

Q: Payment e-check or ACH?

Resort deadline and club deadline may need to be different to allow the club to gather all of the deposits/payments.

Motion: (Alex, 2nd Butch) Accept trip as proposed with max. 26 divers/13 rooms subject to confirmation a out the commission from travel agent. Passed, unanimous.

1. Cozumel(10/24-31/26) and Pla de Riveria(10/31-11/7/2026

Iberostar resorts at both sites.

Motion: by Alex. Accept with comps of 9pd divers as per proposed contract pending the 10% commission, but not dependent upon it. Also, to post this trip for signups. Second: Butch

Discussion: Priscilla shared the details of price/rooms/number of dives. Alex will send out information for Dan and Priscilla to review

Secretary's Report Cont.

and approve. Dan and Priscilla will work together on deposit payments.

Vote: passed. unanimous.

D.Newsletter: March meeting deadline is 3/3/26

E.Unfinished Business: none

F. New Business:

1.Change club meeting days to the 2nd Thursday of the month.

Motion: Butch: Accept the club meeting date change to the 2nd Thursday of each month.
2nd: Alex

Discussion: Will announce at March Club meeting (3/10/26) the upcoming date changes. This will be one month prior to the change. Change goes into effect 4/9/26.

Vote: Passed. Unanimous

2. Change Board meetings to 4th Thursday beginning next month (3/26/26). Motion as stated by Scott,

Second, Priscilla)

Vote: passed. Unanimous.

Next club meeting: 3/10/26

Next Board meeting: 3/26/26

Respectfully submitted
David Carr, Secretary
Carol-Rushing-Carr, Scribe 🇺🇸



From the Treasurer

By Dan Miller



Student with ID, New Diver, First Year **\$10.00**

2025 Membership Renewal **\$20.00**

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.

Contact / Mail to: Bluegrass Dive Club 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](#). 🚩

Manta Rays

(Thanks Dan Miller!)

10 Amazing Facts About Manta Rays

Article by Jasmine Corbett of Scuba Diving Magazine.

Beautiful and enigmatic, manta and devil rays (known collectively as mobulids) are some of the most captivating creatures in our oceans. Close relatives of sharks and other rays, these filter-feeding giants roam tropical and subtropical oceans worldwide, gliding on wingspans that can reach bus-sized proportions. Despite their size, mantas and

devil rays remain elusive, and scientists are still uncovering new aspects of their biology and behavior. Here are some incredible facts about these ocean explorers.

1. Big Brains for a Fish

Manta and devil rays have the largest brains of any fish. Proportionally, their brain size is more comparable to that of mammals, which may explain their reputation for intelligence and curiosity with divers.

2. Always on the Move

From the moment they are born, these rays live a life of perpetual motion. To breathe, they must keep swimming so water flows over their gills, meaning they never truly stop.

3. The Second Largest Fish in Our Oceans

After whale sharks, oceanic manta rays (*Mobula birostris*) take second place. They can reach nearly 23 feet across, about the size of a small bus!

4. A Sting-Free Tail

Unlike their seabed-dwelling relatives, the stingrays, manta rays don't have a venomous barb in the tail, which stingrays use for self-defense. Instead, a manta ray's primary defense mechanism is its large size and speed. When escaping predators, manta rays can accelerate to speeds of up to 24 miles per hour!

5. Mantas Enjoy a Day at the "Spa"

Like many reef fish, mantas visit cleaning stations where smaller fish and shrimp remove parasites, dead skin and debris from their bodies, even venturing into their mouths and gills to tidy up hard-to-reach places.

6. Births Rarely Witnessed

Though manta rays give birth, on average, every two to three years to one or occasionally two pups, no natural birth has ever been recorded in the wild. Aside from aquarium births, the only documented event was an aborted pup from a hunted female in 1967.

7. Courtship Trains

When a female manta ray is ready to mate, she leads males in a “courtship train.” As many as thirty males line up head-to-tail behind her, swimming at high speeds while twisting and turning around the reef, sometimes even leaping from the water. This dramatic display allows the female to select the fittest partner. Courtship activity is often observed near cleaning stations, which serve as important aggregation sites for manta rays.

8. A New Species Described

For years, scientists suspected a third manta species existed in the Atlantic. In 2025, that mystery was solved: the Atlantic manta ray (*Mobula yarae*) was formally described, found from the Caribbean to Brazil, where it shares waters with the larger oceanic manta.

9. High-Flying Acrobatics

Manta rays sometimes leap out of the water, soaring several feet into the air before crashing back down. Why they do this remains a mystery, but theories include parasite removal and communication.

10. Face Spoons

Manta rays are filter feeders, consuming up to 13 pounds of microscopic plankton a day. They have a pair of large fins on their head, called cephalic fins, which act like paddle-shaped scoops to funnel the plankton into their mouths while feeding.



Webmaster

By Alex Fassas



Tales From The Watery Web

“Change Is The Only Constant In Life” - Heraclitus

A new coworker asked a veteran at his workplace, “Why do we do this job this way?” The veteran answered, “Because we have always done it that way.” Our club meetings have seemingly always met on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Well, that has been officially changed so that beginning with the club meeting on Thursday, April 9, 2026, we will begin meeting on the 2nd THURSDAY of each month. UK basketball fans will be free to enjoy both of their favorite things; UK basketball and the Bluegrass Dive Club. The next meeting is on Tuesday, March 10, 2026, then the following meetings are on Thursdays.

THANK YOU's - DAN or Dive Assure Membership and Dive & Travel Insurance

Thank you to the following BGDC members who utilized the club's partner ID or links when purchasing membership or trip insurance: Rob & Melissa Foster, Dive Assure trip insurance in Sept. 2025 and Jan. 2026; David & Carol Carr, DAN trip insurance in Jan. 2026; Alex Fassas & Kathryn Bowers, Dive Assure trip insurance in Aug. 2025 and DAN membership in Feb. 2025 & 2026.

These members benefited themselves with valuable membership benefits and coverages at no additional cost to themselves and a nice commission to the club. Get your name on the list; follow these directions or links. If you already have a DAN membership or dive accident or travel insurance, you can contact DAN Customer Service and ask them to link your member account or policy # to the

Webmaster Cont.

Bluegrass Dive Club, Inc.'s partner DAN ID # 3219835. You can reach DAN Customer Service at member@DAN.org or 919-684-2948.

If you already have a Dive Assure membership or insurance policy, you can contact Dive Assure Customer Service and ask them to link your member account or policy # to the Bluegrass Dive Club, Inc.'s partner ID # 752. You can reach Dive Assure Customer Service at members@DiveAssure.com or 866-898-0921.

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. A recent purchase of trip insurance by two club members has generated \$281.00 in partner rewards for our club. Something they were going to purchase anyway and it cost them the same amount to use the club's partner link when purchasing. More information about the club's partners and links at <https://bluegrassdiveclub.com/dive-travel-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 or use the Contact Us web form.

Safety Information Director

By Bill "Doc" McGrady



March 2026: Safety and Science Corner:
Doctor bill

Insensible Heat Loss & **Hypothermia**.....
"Why would I ever care in tropics about hypothermia?! -That sounds ridiculous!!!!

It's Roatan, air temperature is 82° and water temperatures are 76°...what could go wrong? Why is Diver Bill shivering and sleepy after coming up after the third dive and seeing his eels?

Heat is a flow....it flows from area of greater "heat" to lesser heat by one of 4 ways....conduction, convection, radiation and evaporation..... if scuba diving in just shorts and bikini, we often can run into 3 major heat losses....and the worst part is it hits quietly, stealthily as this is often "insensible" heat loss. [Though there is a very technical definition of "insensible" in physics, we use the scuba diver medicine version of "insensible"]. Here, insensible heat loss is heat loss that is not felt or sensed normally until well into 1st stage of hypothermia, which is shivering and lethargy.

By diving, even though it is tropical paradise and we are hot on the drive to the dive shop in morning, when we enter the water, heat flows from our 98° body swiftly into the water through CONDUCTION: Water pulls heat 25 TIMES greater than air And if your head and neck are major routes [super-highways] of heat conduction.... That is why a cold shower is twice or three times colder to feeling when you shower your head & neck instead of just your torso and below.....try it. Get in shower, turn to coldest setting and shower suddenly excepted neck and head for 1 minute. It's chilly!!! Now repeat, but this time, start with total head and neck and torso.....for 1 minute if you can! This is COLD!!!!!! Now the cold shower is using two types of heat losses—it includes **convection**, which is the flow of

Safety Corner Cont.

water past as well and **conduction**.... This can happen swiftly as you enter even “warm” tropical waters if there is any current whatsoever.....there is an infinite amount of sea water....but your heat output is finite.

So from the moment we hit water, we have conduction at 25 times the power of air and add current like Cozumel and our body heat is being pulled away. The 3rd route, which is quite insensible, is **evaporative heat loss** through your regulator.... We are pulling in air that went from high pressure to low pressure in our regulators; that air expands and is “cold & dry”- meaning no appreciable water vapor. Our lungs evaporate a good deal of water to moisturize the air and it is not “conserved”, unlike normal breathing, because we are exhaling out of our mouths.... Our nose is designed to capture some exhaust heat and moisture- however, our mouths do NOT. So “tank air” is dry & “colder” leading to both a water and heat loss not easily detected....

Radiation is not a high factor of heat loss but is why Mylar blanket work by reflecting the heat back inside.

So diver Doc Bill has been diving, especially for 5 days in a row 3 or even 4 dives a day...his heat has been drawn off and so by Thursday afternoon, dive #3, Doc bill comes up in his shorts and looks quiet and lethargic...you even notice his hands are shivering and his legs are shivering.... Shivering is the body’s attempt to re-heat...however shivering during the dive actually pulls away more heat through convection.....you see, the body requires a tight temperature [and pH] for all the enzymes to work..... so tight, that if core temperature drops to just 2 degrees, 96° Stage I, mild hypothermia results, shivering and the brain slows down, so lethargy and sometimes slowing of thought which can be bad in diving. So now we see the “science.” Repetitive conduction & convection and 5 days of multiple dry tank air has dropped his core temperature and he is shivering and stage I. No dive for him this afternoon, he is to stay on the boat so his slowed thoughts don’t endanger his dive buddy, Julie.

Safety Corner Cont.

Second thing is to get a warm towel and dry him off, but I would keep his wet suit on. Do whatever it takes to keep wind off his body.... in the “old days” they used to rub the limbs to massage them, however this is not done today in Forster aid- reason is that the cold blood from the arms can “shock” the core and heart arrhythmias are a possibility [thankfully, not probable, not at Stage I hypothermia.....] Hot beverages and Luke warm coffee or water are great..... Gatorade will help replenish some glucose[sugar] and electrolytes. A Mylar blanket if available and a trip back to shore is in order, however not emergent if he remains conscious. We get him to his wonderful bed, and wrap him in multiple blankets, a hot shower is NOT advised as same principle of “shocking the core” however a hot-tub, if available and patient is conscious would work. It is highly advisable to stay 24 hours OUT of the water to let the core catch-up. Back to diving Saturday!!!!

So how did Diver Bill wind up here in his room instead of diving on Friday? Easily avoidable through science & safety....keep even a simple scuba skin greatly decreases convective heat loss and neoprene of just a 2-3mm will have great protection for repetitive diving across the week. Drinking a small 8-12ounce of water between tank dives will rehydrate and being mindful of the wind!!

Hypothermia and heat loss is harder to deal with than prevention- keep even a little scuba skin or little neoprene.... consider a dive hood or head scarf to protect the head and neck and bonus: helps keep jellyfish stings from your neck!! Ask me how I know!!!! Be aware that this heat loss is very hard to “feel or detect” so bear it in mind! and never feel embarrassed to sit out a dive if you are too cold...I’ve had some shivering on dives and it’s not fun. Get some sun and sit one tank out and re-warm and you’ll restore your heat capacity. Dry towels do a great deal to deal with wind and sea-spray! 🚩

Bluegrass Dive Club 2026 Calendar

March

10, Tuesday Dive Club Meeting
26, Thursday E.C. Meeting

April

10, Thursday Dive Club Meeting
23, Thursday E.C. Meeting

May

2, Saturday Club's Derby Party
14, Thursday Dive Club Meeting
28, Thursday E.C. Meeting

June

11, Thursday Dive Club Meeting
25, Thursday E.C. Meeting

July

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

August

13, Thursday Dive Club Meeting
??, Saturday Club Pig Roast
27, Thursday E.C. Meeting

September

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

October

15 Thursday Dive Club Meeting
29 Thursday E.C. Meeting

November

12 Thursday Club Meeting (Elections)
26 Thursday E.C. Meeting

December

??, Saturday Christmas Party



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

