

# Oceanids News



## UC SAN DIEGO OCEANIDS BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

VOL. LXIII No. 2

December 2025/January 2026

### **WHALE WATCHING NEWS:**

Sunday January 25th from 10 am to 1 pm on the Legacy ship and the price will be \$28 for anyone over 10 and \$14 for those 10 or under including babies. People can send a check made out to Oceanids to Liz Wills' home address.

For questions please contact Liz at (858 232-7545)

### **Important help from Oceanids is appreciated:**

Dear Members of the Oceanids Emergency Fund Board,

I am writing to express my deepest gratitude for awarding me the grant of \$6,172 through the Oceanids Emergency Fund. At a time of immense personal and financial hardship, your generous support means I will be able to successfully complete my Masters degree program at UC San Diego this June as planned.

Due to the recent and unexpected death of my grandmother abroad combined with ongoing family legal matters, I was facing severe financial strain without means to cover my housing and living costs for the final term. Thanks to your assistance, I now have the security and peace of mind to focus solely on my studies without added stress over basic needs being met.

Knowing I will graduate on schedule and begin a new chapter thereafter brings me immense relief and joy. I am so thankful to the Oceanids board for recognizing my situation and helping me continue my education through these difficulties. Your compassion will forever be remembered.

Sincerely,  
(name withheld)

*More appreciation letters on page 9*

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OCEANIDS CREW 2025-2026

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Honorary Chair: Thespine Kavoulakis, Associate of the Chancellor

Co-Presidents: Mary Hanson.... 858-456-1304  
Liz Winant .....858-231-1496

Immediate Past President: Jim Bunch

Co-1st Vice-Presidents: Barbara Bank 858-484-4597  
Mary Woo.....858-481-6998

2nd Vice-President: Mary Cutchin ...858-729-3888  
(Membership, directory updates)

Recording Secretary: Janet Ambrozek..858-272 2726

Treasurer: Jan Ouren.....858 273-1681

Financial Secretary: Liz Winant .....858-231-1496

Nominating Committee: Anne-France Saillot,  
Marion Spors, Judy Vacquier, Janet Ambrozek, Joan Stevens (alt)

Parliamentarian: Barbara Bank .....858-484-4597

Interest Gr. Coordinator: Judy Vacquier  
858-361-0418

Newcomers: Liz Fong Wills..... (858 232-7545)  
Georgina Sham, gbsham@gmail.com

Historian; TBD

Refreshment Reminder: Mary Hanson 858-456-1304

Sunshine Committee: Diana Vines.....858 459 8248

SDIS: Dorothy Parker.....858 453-6351

**OCEANIDS NEWS** is the newsletter of Oceanids, a UCSD campus organization. Published bi-monthly except July, August & September. Letters to the Editor and articles of interest to UCSD are invited and greatly appreciated. Address all submissions to: UC San Diego Oceanids c/o ISEO - Student Center B 9500 Gilman Drive #0018 La Jolla, CA 92093-0018

PLEASE NOTE The Post Office does not forward OCEANIDS NEWS. Please notify membership chairs of any change of address. Membership and/or subscriptions are \$35 per year

E-MAIL: oceanids@ucsd.edu and also email: enrightroswitha@gmail.com and mwoonew@gmail.com

OCEANIDS ONLINE: <http://ccom.ucsd.edu/~oceanids/>

BOARD MEETINGS: first Thursday every month. Oceanids are invited to attend/observe.

Call president for location. Coffee and refreshments: 9:30 am, meeting starts at 10 am

This year, 2025/26, we have co-presidents Mary Hanson and Liz Winant, and we would like to briefly introduce ourselves



Shortly after I retired from teaching high school French, my neighbor and friend Judy Vacquier told me about a French conversation group led by the late Pat Stone, who lived right down the street. Pat and the other Cafe Français members welcomed me with open arms, and I was thrilled to discover so many local French speakers. Soon I

learned about the bridge group, and it was game on. I continue to look forward to our bi-monthly games. Although we strive to elevate our game, we try not to take ourselves too seriously.

I believe it was Judy who first approached me about serving on the leadership team. My first role was as Interest Group Coordinator, which was a good fit because like so many of us I initially joined Oceanids because I was invited to join an interest group. From 2013 to 2015 I served as president, and enjoyed becoming more involved with our philanthropic mission and our connection to UC San Diego, although I never fully learned how to navigate the bureaucracy. That's still true. From 2015 to 2025 I was recording secretary. During all of these years on the board I've appreciated what a dedicated, friendly and talented group of people I've had the privilege of working with. Now it is a distinct honor to serve as co-president with Liz Winant.

Mary Hanson



Mary and I have a very similar route to joining Oceanids. My friend Judy Vacquier was very persuasive when she talked about the many benefits of joining Oceanids, but I had to wait until I retired from my position at The Birch Aquarium. I finally retired

in 2005 and immediately joined Aviset, the Oceanids birding group. I was an avid birder in England, but had had no opportunity to learn much about Californian birds. This very knowledgeable group of birders taught me, and continues to teach me, much about our birds.

Soon a friend was retiring from her position on the Board as Recording Secretary. I did not know anyone on the board at that time, but was told that this is a great way to become involved, and it was!

One thing led to another and I joined the Book Group and became Financial Secretary. I had experience with the UC financial system and that has proven to be useful. But the most valuable gift Oceanids has given me is the opportunity to meet and work with a wonderful, diverse, fun group of people.

It is an honor to be co-president with Mary Hanson and we look forward to sharing the coming year with you.

Liz Winant

Finally, both of us were pleased to see so many of you at the Fall Brunch, and we want to thank Barbara Bank, Mary Woo, Thespine Kavoulakis and her assistants Claire Hopkins and Christiana Honnet for putting together such a festive and enjoyable event.

## MEMBER ALERT!



**ENTER UPCYCLE SHOW** at the Oceanids Virtual Gallery of Arts and Crafts!!!

Member artists and upcyclers/recyclers are invited to submit items to the Oceanids Upcycle Group Show in our newsletter's virtual Gallery of Arts and Crafts. Read on to

hear more about the invitation to submit entries.

Upcycling is the reusing discarded objects or materials in such a way as to create a product of higher quality or value than the original (AI definition). So, if you have an item that you bought at a thrift store, swap meet or garage sale, etc., and you are upcycling it for your use, enter it in our group show. We'll need a picture of the item, a brief revamped it and, if you want, what wackier the better. That's it. Just a the



description of how you you paid for it. The virtual gallery show for fun of it. And maybe revealing a bit about your aesthetics!



The idea for an Oceanids Upcycle show originated in our Bridge interest group, led by Beate Menzel. Thus, we'll pick some of them to jury the show and pick the winning entries. If you'd like to enter one of your upcycled items, please send a photo and description to



[jouren5353@gmail.com](mailto:jouren5353@gmail.com) by the end of December.

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## OCEANIDS' INTEREST GROUPS

are the backbone of our Oceanids organization. They are here to meet the many varied needs of UCSD families, especially those new to the UCSD campus and the community. If you don't find an activity you would like to participate in, please contact Interest Group Coordinator Judy Vacquier (858) 361-0418 or [jvacq@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jvacq@sbcglobal.net). If five or more Oceanids wish to start a new group, please let her know so we can inform other members. All we ask is that your members be Oceanids. If you are not yet a member of Oceanids, please consider joining us by contacting Mary Cutchin, 858-459-8074, [marycutchin@yahoo.com](mailto:marycutchin@yahoo.com) or by submitting the application form in this issue. Since the newsletter is posted on the Oceanids website we will, for security reasons, not publish addresses (with occasional exceptions). Please call the contact for the necessary information.

If you meet in person the chair has to fill out the FAS Event Liability Form and mail it to Beate Menzel [jrbmenzel@cox.net](mailto:jrbmenzel@cox.net)

### BIRDING GROUP AVISETS

*Contacts: Liz Winant (858) 231 1496,  
[lizwinant@gmail.com](mailto:lizwinant@gmail.com)*

We meet on the 2nd Monday of the month during the academic year.

**Next outings: Dec. 8 and Jan. 12.**

**BOOK GROUP** *Contact: janet goff  
<[janetrgoff@hotmail.com](mailto:janetrgoff@hotmail.com), Liz Winant  
[lizwinant@gmail.com](mailto:lizwinant@gmail.com)*

We meet on the second Tuesday morning of every month at 9:30 AM for chatting and 10 AM for review. Everyone is welcome; we are happy to greet new members who like to read a variety of fiction and non-fiction and who value good writing and a lively discussion. Please join us. We would love to have you in our friendly little group. Our gatherings consist of 8 or 9 of us and there's always room for more.

Please be one of them. We meet at the Cardiff Cove Clubhouse; please contact either of us for directions.

Date Leader / "Title" / Author / Snacks

DEC 9 John."The Centaur"/John Updike/TBA

JAN 13 Joan "The Briar Club"/Kate Quinn/TB  
Another book if you want to read ahead:

FEB 10 Jim "Time of the Child"/Niall  
Williams TBA

### BOOGIE BOARDING BUDDIES

*Contact: Liz Fong Wills*

[lizfong2@gmail.com](mailto:lizfong2@gmail.com) (858 232-7545)

We meet every Saturday at 9:30 am and/or Sunday at 10:30 am all year round when the ocean water temperature at LaJolla Shores is 55 degrees F. or more. You must bring your own boogie board plus wetsuit if you feel the need for one.

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**CAFE ESPAÑOL**      *Contacts: Alicia*  
*(858) 353-3878; 353-3878; Vicky Lindblade*  
*vlindblade@mac.com or (858)-452 1739*

This conversation group is designed for fluent Spanish speakers who wish to keep up their Spanish and learn new vocabulary.

We meet the second Thursday of the month in person from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. One hour of conversation and one hour of reading aloud and group discussion. Call chair for more information.

**Next meeting: Dec 18 and January 8.**

**CAFÉ FRANÇAIS**      *Contacts: Anne-*  
*France Saillot, af.saillot@gmail.com*

For who loves the French language and wants to practice listening and speaking French, our group welcomes you ! Our members come from all over the world. Every reunion, we discuss a topic and learn new vocabulary. We meet every 2nd Wednesday of the month at 10:00 to 12:00 from October to May.

**Meeting: Dec. 17 and Jan. 14.**

### **CELLPHONE PHOTOGRAPHY**

Contact: *Kim Signoret-Paar,*  
*kspaar@outlook.com*

The group meets on Zoom on the second Thursday of each month at 10 am to noon for discussion / demonstration / instruction and sharing of our cellphone photographs. Activities, such as field trips, will be communicated to the group's email list. For more information,

please contact Kim.

**Next meetings: Jan. 11 and Dec. 8.**

### **CINEMA SOIRÉE**

Contact: *Jim Bunch at jlbunch@ucsd.edu*

The group meets at a designated home on the second Sunday of each month (all year long) at 7:00pm for socializing; movie discussion starts at 7:30pm sharp. Light refreshments will be served. You will be contacted by e-mail about which movie to see and where the discussion takes place.

**Next meeting: Dec 14 and Jan. 11.**

**DAY BRIDGE** Contact: *Beate Menzel*  
*jrblmenzel@cox.net or (619) 401-1557*

We meet the first and third Tuesdays of the month all year long at various members' homes. We start at 10am and usually end at or before 3pm. Everyone brings her / his own lunch. The hostess will provide drinks. Call for information.

**Next meetings: Dec 2+16 and Jan 8+20.**

### **GERMAN KAFFEEKLATSCH**

Contact: *Roswitha Enright 858 459-7375*  
*(renright@ucsd.edu)*

This group is for beginners and experienced German speakers alike. Guaranteed no pressure. Just come on the 3rd Tuesday at 3pm and have a good time. Only German spoken. If you want to join, please ccontact Roswitha. TIME: 3 PM TO 4:30 PM.

**Next meetings: Dec 16 and Jan 20.**

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**HORTICULTURE, a new Interest Group for all who love plants and like to care for them.**

*Contact:*  
*Nancy Groves, (858) 453-6486;*  
*nancygroves@me.com*

### **MOVEABLE FEAST II**

*Contact: Mary Cutchin (858) 729 3888 or*  
*marycutchin@yahoo.com*

This group meets every couple of months for drinks at a member's house. From there we carpool to the restaurant. Next dinner call Mary.

### **PIANO AND CHAMBER SOIRÉE**

*Contact: Judy Vacquier (858) 361-0418 or*  
*jvacq@sbcglobal.net*

The Piano Soiree will meet Sunday, December 21 at 3:00 pm at the home of Judy Vacquier. The piano soiree will meet Sunday, January 25, 2026 at 3:00 pm at the home of Polina Sisman. The attendees will be notified by email one week before. If interested, please contact Judy Vacquier.

**Next meetings: Dec.21 and Jan.25.**

**TAPAS ON THURSDAY** *Contact :*  
*Barbara Bank [bbank@ucsd.edu](mailto:bbank@ucsd.edu)*

The strength of our group is the warmth we share. If you wish to join us, please contact Barbara Bank ([bbank@ucsd.edu](mailto:bbank@ucsd.edu)) to be added to our mailing list. We meet on the third Thursday of the month, at member's homes. Everyone brings a tapa to share. It may be sweet or savory. We frequently choose a theme for that month's tapas and have a delightful time while sharing food and friendship.

**Next meeting is Dec 18 and Jan 15.**

### **WEDNESDAY COFFEE**

*Contacts: Georgina*

*Sham, [gbsham@gmail.com](mailto:gbsham@gmail.com).*

*Lynn*

*Jahn, [lynnjahn@gmail.com](mailto:lynnjahn@gmail.com).*

*Come*

join our social group of Oceanids, newcomers, learn strange and wonderful American customs. Please contact Georgina or Lynn for more information.

**WINE TASTING** *Contact Alicia Flores*  
*Meneses at*

*[virginiacisne@yahoo.com](mailto:virginiacisne@yahoo.com) or 858-353*  
*3878*

*GERMAN KAFFEKLATSCH IS LOOKING FOR NEW MEMBERS. IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO HAS SPENT SOME TIME IN A GERMAN SPEAKING COUNTRY AND WANTS TO KEEP OR ADD TO THEIR VOCABULARY LET THEM KNOW ABOUT GERMAN KAFFEKLATSCH. NO PRESSURE GUARANTEED. OUR FRIENDLY GROUP WILL WELCOME YOU.*

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Sometimes it takes visitors to get us old folks to move out of the comfortable easy chair and away from a favorite book to see new vistas. My sister and I had that opportunity. Visitors from Germany and also desert aficionados had planned



a trip with us to one of their favorite places, Organ Pipe National Monument in Arizona. It was the time of the shut-down but the park was open, no officers at the entrance but clean and serviced restrooms. Needless to say we had a wonderful time, staying in Gila Bend for two night and spending one full day at the park. There were very few people there and we had the feeling we had the park all to ourselves. Not only were the organ pipes plentiful and lovely but there were also a large number of saguaro cacti. We had planned to also visit the Saguaro National Park near Tucson but visited other deserts

instead. The five days seemed like ten wonderful days and we decided to do this more often, even without visitors. Roswitha Enright



Dear Oceanids Board,

I'm writing to confirm receipt of the Oceanids Emergency Fund and to express my sincere gratitude for your support. The \$1,500 assistance directly helped us recover from fire-related expenses, allowing us to cover a significant portion of the outstanding liability. This support meaningfully eased both the financial and mental burden on my family at a time when we were stretched thin.

Beyond the immediate financial relief, the Fund was a beacon of hope during a very difficult period. Knowing that the UCSD community stood with us made a profound difference. I am especially grateful to ISEO and to you, Grace, for your patient, empathetic guidance since February--your responsiveness and understanding carried us through the logistics and the stress.

Thanks to Oceanids, we were able to focus on stability—returning to coursework, research, and daily life—without the constant worry of how to bridge the gap. I deeply appreciate the compassion and care behind this program and the generosity of everyone who contributes to it.

Please feel free to share this letter with the Oceanids' Board. If any further information would be helpful, I'm happy to provide it.

With heartfelt thanks,  
(Name withheld)  
Computer Science and Engineering,  
UC San Diego

**You are welcome!!**

Dear Oceanids Board Members,

I am writing to express my heartfelt gratitude for your generous support through the Oceanids Emergency Fund. I received an award of \$1,500 (approximately \$1,290 after taxes), which came at a time when I was facing significant financial and emotional stress.

As an international graduate student pursuing my studies on an education loan, I experienced an unexpected accident at my UCSD graduate housing that led to additional expenses. The financial burden from this incident was difficult to manage alongside the academic and research responsibilities of graduate life. Receiving this support from Oceanids helped me pay a portion of those housing-related charges and brought immediate relief from the financial pressure I was under.

Beyond the monetary help, this assistance truly lightened my mental load. It allowed me to focus again on my coursework, research, and overall well-being without the constant worry of how to make ends meet. Knowing that there is a community at UCSD that genuinely cares about students in times of hardship means more than words can convey.

Thank you once again for your generosity and compassion. Your kindness made a real difference in my life, and I will always remain grateful for the support you provided during a challenging time.

With sincere appreciation,  
(name withheld)  
Graduate Student, Department of Science  
and Engineering  
University of California, San Diego

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
		<b>Day Bridge</b>	<b>Wednesday Coffee</b>	<b>Board Meeting</b>		
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	Birding	<b>Book Group</b>		<b>Cellphone Photography</b> <b>Cafe Espanol</b>		
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Cinema Soiree		<b>Day Bridge German</b>		<b>Tapas</b>		
21	22	23/30	24	25	26	27
<b>Piano Soiree</b>						
28	29	30	31			

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
		<b>Day Bridge</b>		<b>Cafe Espanol</b> <b>Cellphone Photography</b>		
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Cinema Soiree	Birding	<b>Book Group</b>	<b>Wednesday Coffee</b> <b>Cafe Francais</b>	<b>Tapas</b>		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
		<b>Day Bridge German</b>				
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
<b>Piano Soiree</b>						



- What do you get if you cross a snowman and a dog? Frost-bite.
- Why did the tree go to the barber? It needed a trim.
- What's an elf's favorite musical genre? Wrap music.
- Why are Christmas trees bad at knitting? They always drop their needles.
- What do you give a snowman with a fever? A chill pill.
- Why did the reindeer take up boxing? He wanted to be a heavy sleigh-weight.
- What did one snowman say to the other who was complaining? "Don't worry — you'll melt under pressure."
- Why is December such a cool month? Because it has Brrrr in the name.
- What do you call Santa when he takes a break? Santa Pause.
- Why did the Elf go to school? To improve his elf-abet
- What did Frosty's girlfriend give him when she was mad at him? The cold shoulder.



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WELCOME NEWCOMERS!  
UC San Diego Oceanids  
c/o ISEO - Student Center B  
9500 Gilman Drive #0018  
La Jolla, CA 92093-0018



**OCEANIDS IS AN OFFICIAL SUPPORT GROUP OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO, PROMOTING FRIENDSHIP AND SHARED INTERESTS, OPEN TO ALL WHO ARE INTERESTED IN THE SUCCESS AND WELFARE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA.**