

The humpback whale program has again received generous ongoing support from the **Beneficia Foundation**.

The large whale disentanglement program thanks the **NOAA Fisheries** for ongoing support.

We are most grateful to **Kingman Yacht Center** for its donation toward the publication of the Waterways of Cape Cod program's most recent guide, "Upper Buzzards Bay."

The **Pegasus Foundation** has made a grant to the MassSail program aboard *Spirit of Massachusetts*.

The following individuals and institutions responded generously to our appeal for start-up funding for the Cape Cod Bay Watch program, now in the planning stages: **Robin Evans** and **Lincoln K. Sharpless, Seamen's Long Point Charitable Foundation, James** and **Mary Sexton**, and **Wendy Shadwell**.

We are also grateful to the following individuals and organizations for their generous ongoing support: **Grace W. Allsop Foundation, Armando Carbonell, Sally Dole, Hiebert Charitable Foundation, David Hoffenberg, Michael LeFort, Martha Morse Foundation, Thomas Niles, and Seth Sprague Educational and Charitable Foundation**.

Staff Notes

Continuing education is part of on-the-job training at the Center, as evidenced by the recent experiences of two members of the staff and several guest researchers over the summer:

For the second year in a row, **Terri Smith**, research assistant in the coastal geology program, has received a Morris K. Udall Scholarship. The Excellence in National Environmental Policy Foundation awards 80 merit-based Morris K. Udall Scholarships annually on the basis of commitment to careers in the environment, health care or tribal public policy, leadership potential, and academic achievement. Terri has also been awarded a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Ernest F. Hollings (Hollings) scholarship. The Hollings scholarship is designed to encourage undergraduate training in oceanic and atmospheric science, research, technology, and education and to increase public understanding and support for stewardship of the ocean and atmosphere and improve environmental literacy.

Meanwhile, **Kathryn Longley**, a senior at Wesleyan, spent much of her summer aboard *Shearwater* and the Dolphin Fleet learning firsthand about the discipline required for field research in population biology. In recounting her summer at sea, Kate said, "What I've really enjoyed about interning here is that I've been able to see that it still takes your breath away to see a whale up close even if you've been watching them and doing data collection all day. I always wondered whether scientists were still able to get genuinely excited about the animals after doing such rigorous field work . . . the people I've been able to work with are so visibly passionate."

Joining Kate on the humpback summer team were several other interns, volunteers and researchers from around the country, including **Wei-Chien Lai**, a master's degree candidate at Yale University; **Emma Timmins-Schiffman**, an undergrad at Hamilton College; **Astrid Frisch**, who works among whales in the eco-tourism industry in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico; and **Justin Viezbicke** and **David Mattila**, both of the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary.

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COVER PHOTO
R/V *Shearwater*, PCCS's primary research vessel, departing from Provincetown Harbor for her annual cruise throughout the Gulf of Maine.

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COASTWATCH

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A SUMMER AT SEA

Close to shore...
far from home...
and in between.



Pauline Kamath
Ph.D. candidate at Berkeley and Ruth Hiebert Fellowship recipient



Jooke Robbins
Director of the Humpback Program



Twenty-Nine Something

by Peter Borrelli

Nearly five years ago following our 25th anniversary, we began the slow and arduous process of planning for the future. Asking board members and staff to envision what the Center will or should be doing in even ten years is often like asking children what they want to be when they grow up. I recall one frustrated staff member during a retreat remarking that he did not even know what he was going to be doing next Monday. However, step by step, without the help of expensive consultants or preparation of lengthy documents, we felt our way and came to a few basic conclusions that now form the basis of our plan for the next ten years.

First and foremost, we intend to **pursue excellence in the field of science, furthering our knowledge of the marine environment**, primarily in the inshore and offshore waters of Massachusetts. And while marine mammals will continue to be a major focus of our studies, we will expand our habitat studies and phenomena such as red tide and the impact of industrial and municipal pollutants.

Secondly, we must **expand and intensify our educational programming**. Assuming that we can do our part to understand and protect the marine environment, it is imperative that we inspire future generations and prepare them for the challenges that lie ahead.

Thirdly, we must **become more active in the field of public policy**. We can no longer afford to leave environmental action to others but must do everything in our power to educate policy makers on the best means of protecting and managing the marine environment.

Fourthly, our **commitment to marine mammal rescue should not waiver and our expertise should be shared around the world**.

In terms of programs, we have made considerable progress in the past year alone, firming up scientific collaborations with Cornell, Texas A&M, the Hawaiian Humpback National Marine Sanctuary, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, and others; launching MassSail with our new education partner the Ocean Classroom Foundation; and expanding our public policy program into the field of ocean planning and management.

Now on the eve of our 30th anniversary, key elements of a plan are coming together. High on everyone's list of priorities has been the need for expanded facilities. In the last issue of *Coastwatch*, I announced

that a deal on a new building was imminent. I am pleased to report that the deed is done. We have completed negotiations to acquire the former Provincetown high school annex. The building is an 11,000-square-foot, two-story structure built in the 1960s. The Center's bid of \$850,000, payable in three installments over the next three years, has been accepted by the town and soon after the closing we hope to begin basic renovations with borrowed funds. The total cost of the project, including building renovations, equipment, and furnishings is expected to total about \$2.5 million.

The building will become our **Research and Education Campus** and will house offices and labs, classrooms, an exhibit area, and a small marine library open to the public. By acquiring an existing building and not adding to the Cape's development woes, we hope we have set an example. We also hope to incorporate elements of "green" construction in our plans. Energy conservation will be our number one priority. The low pitch and orientation of the roof also makes the building highly suitable for solar panels.

Long-time board member and vice chair Roslyn Garfield has agreed to serve as chair of a capital campaign committee whose work is already underway. We have already received pledges of \$250,000. Please let me know if you are willing to help us meet our goal. ■

Close to shore... the Beach is Moving

The Center's coastal geology team has been heading to sea in order to survey and record coastal changes affecting the beaches, bluffs and dunes of the outer Cape. This apparent contradiction is based on the theory that near- and offshore changes play a major role in determining what happens to the beach and shoreline. Senior Scientist Graham Giese, a Center founder and oceanographer emeritus at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, and Research Assistant Terri Smith are studying coastal change as part of a cooperative project with Mark Adams, GIS Specialist at the Cape Cod National Seashore (CCNS).

Using the Center's 19 foot skiff *R/V Shackleton* for their weekly surveys, the team is resurveying the

near-shore seafloor from Chatham to Provincetown, which was last surveyed in the 1880s. A comparison of the two surveys will not only tell what happened over the past century but will provide some indication of what to expect for the next 100 years. Since the entire outer beach from Chatham to Provincetown is part of the national seashore, both organizations are intensely interested in gaining a greater understanding of how the coast of outer Cape Cod is changing, for both scientific and practical reasons.

And while the team is primarily conducting research, its project demonstrates how the Center's research and education efforts are mutually beneficial. Terri, for example, is pursuing a degree in coastal and marine policy and management at the University of Rhode Island while also assisting Graham with his research -- an arrangement that benefits them both and the Center as a whole. Also, Terri and Graham are both qualified



Coastal geology team members Blanca Ramos (CCNS), Terri Smith (PCCS) and Mark Adams (CCNS) aboard *R/V Shackleton*

... far from home Humpback whaling: are U.S. whales at risk?

The humpback team spent the season aboard the *R/V Shearwater*, surveying the Gulf of Maine population in its summer range from Nantucket to Nova Scotia. The team relies on these cruises to track the lives of individual humpback whales. One of its more unfortunate but unusual discoveries this year was the fate of one fertile female that was killed six years ago.

Haar was from New England, and at least 13 years old when she was killed in 1999 in the company of a new calf by whalers from St. Vincent and the Grenadines, a southeastern Caribbean nation that typically takes no more than two humpback whales per year for subsistence purposes. Although an international moratorium continues against commercial whaling, several nations perform whaling legally for

"aboriginal" or "scientific" purposes. Until now, none of these individuals had been successfully matched to any cataloged whale in the North Atlantic. In July, PCCS reported the first successful identification to the Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Commission. Although Haar's death is sad news, the current level of aboriginal takes is not considered a threat to the North Atlantic population. In fact, more Gulf of Maine humpbacks likely die each year from inadvertent human sources, such as entanglement and ship strikes.

On a larger scale, Japan announced plans to add Antarctic humpback whales to their scientific whaling program. Their proposal has been strongly debated in the international community, due in part to the uncertain status of Southern

Hemisphere populations. Among those at potential risk are humpback whales that breed in U.S. territorial waters in the South Pacific. In September, PCCS staff will begin their third season of research in American Samoa, in collaboration with two U.S. National Marine Sanctuaries: Hawaiian Islands and Fagatele Bay (American Samoa). Research to date indicates that this is a low-density breeding ground and that individuals range as far as Tonga, the Cook Islands and French Polynesia during the breeding season. Through additional research, we hope to clarify the size and extent of this population and also to identify specific feeding areas in the Antarctic. This information will be critical to determining the potential impact of proposed whaling activities. ■

... and in between A Whale of a Sail

For two weeks in July, science and education combined to create great chemistry aboard the *SSV Spirit of Massachusetts* as 16 students embarked on MassSail's first two-week, three-credit WhaleSail course and adventure. The students, including high school upperclassmen and college undergraduates, came from as far away as Arizona, California and Hawaii, as well as New England and included three scholarship students from Cape Cod Community College.

The *Spirit's* mission on this journey was to travel to the northern summer feeding grounds in search of the great whales, including Jeffreys Ledge, Platts Bank and the Great South Channel, while presenting a shipboard curriculum that included introductory marine mammalogy, including field identification and taxonomy; oceanography and ecology of the Gulf of Maine; and policy study

from whale entanglement to wind farms. Students were also expected to learn traditional seamanship and navigation.

Over the course of the two weeks at sea, the students served as deckhands and became vital participants in the operation of the vessel. They learned to chart and navigate by the sun and stars; how to collect opportunistic research data, including atmospheric and oceanographic conditions, marine mammal sightings, behavioral and photographic data; and developed interpersonal skills for living and working in unfamiliar conditions.

Each student was required to make both oral and written presentations about the anatomy and physiology of whales. Research topics included: "Assessment of Techniques Used to Identify Individual Cetaceans," "Distribution of Dolphins in the Gulf of Maine," and "The Use of Photo



SSV Spirit of Massachusetts, sailing in Provincetown Harbor during Schooner Regatta 2005. PHOTO E. NOGIEC

Identification to Find the Gender Bias of Fluke Scarring, Cuts and Pigmentation Patterns of the North Atlantic Humpback Whale."

A plethora of marine animals were recorded and observed during the trip, including basking sharks, blue fin tuna, shearwaters, petrels, and over 1,000 marine mammals, including: minke, finback, humpback and sei whales; several hundred Atlantic white-sided and common dolphins and over 75 critically endangered North Atlantic right whales. ■

EVENTS

Fall Banquet: November 10

This November, the Center will hold its first annual fall dinner in Provincetown since the popular Trash Fish Banquets of yesteryear. In true Trash Fish



Ruth Hiebert in her Provincetown garden. CAPE COD MAGAZINE

tradition, the banquet is to be informal, community-oriented, geared to the more relaxed fall season, and affordably priced to encourage as many participants as possible. The inaugural banquet will take place at the Lobster Pot Restaurant on Thursday, November 10. Tickets are \$45.

The purpose of the banquet is to raise funds for a fellowship to be annually awarded to an exceptional female science scholar associated with the Center. The fellowship will be named for Ruth Hiebert, a central pillar of the Center for nearly its entire history, who passed away last year. Ruth was without question one of the Center's most important board members, patrons and friends. She was also an ardent believer in grassroots support for grassroots organizations and personified the kind of active community leader who knows communities need their non-profit

organizations to remain dynamic, interesting and diverse.

The first very worthy recipient of the Ruth Hiebert Fellowship is Pauline Kamath, pictured on our cover and currently pursuing her Ph.D. in genetics at Berkeley. Pauline served as research assistant to Jooke Robbins, director of the humpback whale program, from 2002 through 2004, and we expect she will make great contributions to the field throughout her career and will continue to collaborate with the Center's humpback program as well.

We really want to make this an annual event that everyone associated with the Center, with Provincetown, and with Ruth can enjoy and be proud of. Please call 508-487-3622, ext. 101 or e-mail ccs@coastalstudies.org to reserve your spot for this important event. ■