



May 2006

### **OceansWide Newsletter: Maine by June**

Hello Everyone,

Recently we had our OceansWide spring meeting to finalize the plans for this summer in Boothbay, Maine. After the meeting I realized it's been a while since my last newsletter. It seems so much is happening and happening so fast it may be time for us to start putting together a monthly newsletter. So here we go, I will try to explain what has solidified so far and fill you in on where we need help.

At the meeting we were able to schedule most of the seminar speakers for the summer series. We finalized the youth program for the summer and made arrangements to bring in our youth dive experts to help us design our own dive program for children 8 to 13 years old. We discussed the possibility of having several teacher workshops. One at the beginning of the summer to give educators a heads up about what our plans are for the future and ask them to get involved. Then another at the end of the summer to see if what aspects of our program interested them throughout the summer and to see how they would like to incorporate OceansWide into their classrooms. We are planning to have the first workshop coincide with the OceansWide Open house and festivities to kick off the summer at the Maine State Aquarium. ...More to come, please enjoy the read, give a shout if you have any questions/advice or would like to get involved to help us in our quest to get students and teacher involved in this amazing opportunity.

#### **The Summer Program... some changes since our last visit:**

I have to confess, I got a little over zealous last fall about the possibilities for this summer. The thought was we would be able to raise the \$700,000 by now which would have given us the freedom to put on an amazing show for this summer's proof of concept program. It would have allowed us to hire several staff members who could have worked full time to support our efforts and get a push on such items as: finding further funding, the summer program, the educational curriculum and research for our capitol equipment. Unfortunately we came up short. Not a big deal, we'll just have to put that plan off until next summer. We tried our best and everyone involved has done a bang up job in the attempt to raise the funds and put together the necessary materials. It's just going to take a little more time than expected.

Of course this means we had to come up with a contingency plan and the persistence and patience of the team paid off again. Peter Girguis, Ed Seidel and Christy Herren got

together in Maine and were able to reorganize and downsize the existing program to one that will be much more manageable. Their ideas will enable us to implement this plan in ample time to create a successful summer program. It will also allow us to accomplish almost exactly the same goals as the previous plan. Many thanks to Ed, Pete and Christy and everyone who has helped along the way... Thank you for being so understanding and flexible.

The downsizing of the plan did create several cuts. We won't be able to take quite as many students to sea with us this summer and we will have to tighten the belt in other places to stay within the budget. Not to worry I believe everyone involved is going to have an exceptionally good time this summer on the coast of Maine this summer as we launch OceansWide into its first successful seasons!

### **The Summer Project for 2006 Revised:**

We will have two and possibly three different types of ROV's depending on negotiations. Ed Seidel has secured the loan of an ROV from Video Ray. This Video Ray GTO Pro III will be used at the end of the Maine State Aquarium dock to teach the public what an ROV is capable of. Ed has also purchased several ROV kits which will be used in the "Build Your Own ROV" program at the Aquarium. We will have one, perhaps two midsized ROVs, which will be loaned to us either by NASA or Benthos. NASA's submarine is named Phantom and the Benthos sub is the Stingray. Peter Girguis will be visiting Benthos in Falmouth, Massachusetts this week to discuss the possibility of getting a Stingray on loan for the summer. More on that when Pete gets back.

On the educational front, our Director of Education who has been volunteering for the past year and a half, Dr. Christy Herren has just started a new job working as Program Coordinator with the Microbial Sciences Initiative at Harvard University. Her new job and her new life in Cambridge have been keeping her extremely busy. Christy is a wonderful friend who has contributed greatly to OceansWide, but for now she feels it would be best for her and for OceansWide if she were to take a step back and concentrate on her new job. We hope she will continue to stay involved with OceansWide and visit us as often as she can. Thank you Christy for all that you have helped us accomplish.

Melissa "Mel" Ackerman recently joined the team and will step in as Director of Education. She has a very busy time ahead of her for sure, but has already come up to speed on what we have planned for this summer and has begun creating a plan that will take us well into the future. Welcome to Mel and to her husband Brian. Brian has joined in with us to help with many things as we build up to our proposed program, but it is what he will do once we become fully operational that means the most. Brian will be sailing as Captain on board our research vessel and comes to us with many years of experience as a captain on board an ROV support/research vessel.

Mel and the other members of our education team, including Christy Herren, Bill Hallett and other volunteers will conduct the first OceansWide Open House at the Maine State Aquarium July 8<sup>th</sup>. We will take this opportunity to explain our program in depth, get the

local educators involved and give them a chance to get to know us a little better as we kick off the summer with a bang. Our need to create interest in the educational community is a must. We will establish what requirements are needed in order to fulfill and comply with the rules of Maine educational system. These are of great importance and will allow us to become an integral part of the educational system. The educational team will also schedule the teachers ROV orientation and the Big Brothers/Big Sisters outings which will further explain our main goal (OceansWide 2008 and beyond). Our current boat schedule will enable us to sail two days a week. We will use the Video Ray at the dock on a daily basis to accomplish the other portions of our community outreach program. The team will be contacting teachers in the local area during the next month and will be organizing the at sea schedule. If you know of any educators who would be interested in this program please have them contact us as soon as possible. Beginning this summer we will also invite our supporters to sail with us in order to share with them our vision and allow them to see first hand what they are enabling us to accomplish.

Captain Jim Kalloch has offered to make his boat available during week days and will run us off shore to Monhegan for teacher orientation, Big Brothers/Big Sisters outings and VIP donor cruises. Jim's boat still comes at a cost of \$800 per day, but with all things considered this is a very generous amount. This may limit us to the number of times we will be able to use his services this summer, but we will do our best and try to get as many folks as possible out on the boat to share with us an adventure beneath the waves.

Ed Seidel is also looking into the possibility of working with the Hardy Tour Boats to see if we might be able to get board to share the ROV experience with their guests and naturalists.

As mentioned earlier we were able to schedule times for everyone involved to join us in Maine at some point during the summer. Our volunteer group is growing and we have a very impressive list of truly talented folks working to help further the success of OceansWide. Those who are already in Maine and those who will be coming to visit as seminar speakers, volunteers and advisors are:

**Seminar speakers and guest ROV pilots:**

***Emory Kristof*** (arrives June 25<sup>th</sup>, seminar June 27<sup>th</sup>)

***Mark Talkovic*** (arrives July 1<sup>st</sup>, seminar July 5<sup>th</sup>)

***Amy West*** (arrives July 1<sup>st</sup>, seminar July 7<sup>th</sup>)

***Rob and Kande Sherlock*** (arrives July 8<sup>th</sup>, seminar July 12<sup>th</sup>)

***Karen Osborn*** (arrives July 20<sup>th</sup>, seminar July 20<sup>th</sup>)

***Christy Herren*** and several Department of Marine Resources Scientists will also be joining us to give seminars later in the summer.

The summer seminar series is designed to inform the local community about the different niches ROV's have filled in ocean research and it will explain how a program like OceansWide can and will enhance the educational experience for students in our rural

maritime communities and eventually benefit the students around the country then perhaps around the world.

The seminar series will be kicked off by Emory Kristof who will be coming to Maine the last week in June to tell us about his life experiences spent under the sea and how the use of underwater equipment, ROV's and manned submarines were of great benefit to him during his very successful career with the National Geographic Society. Mark Talkovic and Amy West will be there the first week of July. Their seminars will include talks and photos of their dives in the south pacific, Antarctica and piloting MBARI's submarines. Rob and Kande Sherlock will join us for the second week in July. Rob's seminar will be about his use of ROV's to collect and study creatures in the midwater. Karen Osborn is visiting during the third week of July. Karen will be discussing her research on the midwater and benthic creatures she has studied through the use of ROV technology. Both Rob and Karen will also share stories of their recent time spent in Antarctica using our very own Phantom ROV to study the communities carried away from the Ross and Weddell Ice Shelves as massive icebergs break free and drift out into the open ocean. Please have a look at Karen's bio on the Advisor page of the OceansWide website ([www.oceanswide.org](http://www.oceanswide.org)); you'll be able to check out other bio's coming soon.

**Education/Event Coordinators and Volunteers:**

**Traci Conlin** (Is tentatively scheduled for the 2<sup>nd</sup> week in July and will be working on building collaborations with local businesses and helping to put on our summer seminars)

**Peter Girguis** (Will also be joining us several times during the summer and will be working with local educators)

**Brian and Melissa Ackerman** (arrive July 2<sup>nd</sup> and will be doing a great deal of everything mentioned above)

**Gil Falcone and Brianne Berlin** from the Monterey Bay Aquarium (arrive second week in July, conduct Youth SCUBA Program for the week)

**Jason Drake** (Is in Maine and will be helping out with the ROV's and working at the educational open house)

**Skip Owen** (Is in Maine, Skip is another very talented Captain and will be working with Brian to organize and conduct our educational cruises and work with our ROV group)

**Bill and Suzanne Hallett** (Are in Maine, Bill will be helping with the educational program throughout the summer. Suzanne and Brian will be planning and presenting the events as they unfold over the six weeks of our program)

**Connor and Sarah Kate Scott and Yeonok Hong** (arrive July 1<sup>st</sup> and June 25<sup>th</sup> they will be volunteering for the Youth SCUBA Program, ROV lessons and entertainment as needed to keep us all sane. And they will be in charge of providing hospitality for our out of town guests)

If there is anyone else out there who would like to join us, please let me know your presence would be a pleasure.

We are also looking for several young volunteers who are willing to help our friends from the Underwater Explorers Program as they explore with SCUBA around the

shallows at the Aquarium Cove... do you know any? These spaces are filling up fast, so please let us know as soon as you can! Take a look below to learn more.

Gil Falcone (Senior Dive Officer/Volunteer Coordinator Dive Program) and Brianne Berlin (Assistant Dive Officer/Underwater Explorers Coordinator) will visit us from the Monterey Bay Aquarium the second week of July. They will survey the cove in front of the Maine State Aquarium and assist us as we build our own youth SCUBA diving program designed to mirror one they have successfully run from the Monterey Bay Aquarium for several years. This program will require several young volunteers to suit up and join us in the water as Gil and Brianne do some preliminary exploration. Jeff Jones (NAUI dive instructor) and Chris Rigaud (Senior Dive Safety Officer with the Darling Marine Center) will accompany Gil and Brianne to assist in the guidance of our young volunteers and to learn for themselves what it will take to create such a program.

### **Grants, Donations and Other Funding:**

Recently we have been making contact with many of our OceansWide friends and families asking them to donate. I ask that if at all possible you consider making a donation and please pass this newsletter on to anyone else you feel might be interested in what we at OceansWide are offering. At this time individual donors like yourself are our major support system, a system we are relying heavily on your gifts to fund this summer's Proof of Concept program. The amount of your generosity doesn't matter quite so much as the fact that you show your support in some way.

At this time we do have good news about donations. Through the contacts we have made so far word seems to be spreading and the trickle of generous gifts has turned into a steady stream. Of the \$25,000 needed we've just hit \$5,225. And even though we're not quite out of the woods just yet, we are optimistic about what is to come and hope that soon we will have the funds to pay for all that we have to support, the boat and ROV's, the workshops and open house, seminars, insurance, fliers, staff clothes and materials... it seems like a lot, but at least now our goal doesn't seem be quite so far out of reach.

Every one of us at OceansWide would like to thank those of you who have already donated and we hope you will be able to join us at some point this summer so we can show our appreciation, show you what you've become a part of and give you a preview of what have helped us to accomplish.

Other advances in the fundraising department; Traci Conlin has been leading the OceansWide Grants Team and we are ramping up for a long year of proposal writing. The grants team consists of seven very talented and experienced grant writers. Two grants have already been generated, submitted and are up for review. We have several other grants being finalized and will be submitted before the summer. As one of our team so eloquently put... two down only 67 to go more to go... this year!

Several of us on the grants team have been working with a group in San Francisco called Cause Aide. It's a click to donate website design firm who has put together a website for

us. We are in the process of finding a sponsor who is willing to donate somewhere between fifty cents or a dollar every time someone visits and clicks our website. It doesn't cost the clicker anything, but every time a click is registered, we get a little closer to our goal. We're currently trying to find a sponsor and have been talking with L.L. Bean and Tom's of Maine to see if they will consider coming on board with us. If anyone can think of any other organizations we should contact as potential sponsors please let us know? I will make sure the word gets out once we have found our sponsor(s) and I hope you will join us and click away every day!

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the Grants Team for all they have accomplished thus far and for all they are planning to achieve. Considering everyone seems to be working the equivalent of a job and half on top of what is being done for OceansWide... taking care of family... and all the day to day things we have to deal with in life, I have to say I am truly amazed and appreciate everything that has been accomplished. You are all doing an exceptional job. With any luck we will reach our goal of \$700,000.00 by the end of 2006.

Thanks also to everyone who has joined in to build this amazing team. The Educational Team, the Marine Ops Team, the advisors and summer volunteers. I can't even begin to express how much I appreciate your commitment and enthusiasm in helping create this program. Thanks also to my brother Andrew and his business partner Kris Robinson, Vice President of <http://www.promoshopboise.com/> for offering to donate the staff and volunteer outfits for the summer and to Brian for doing all the work he has get all these outfits put to together.

Thanks to everyone who has donated in one way or another to make the OceansWide dream a reality.

Sincerely,

Buzz Scott