

# National Shellfisheries Association

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

September 2010



ORONO, ME

## BIGGER AND BETTER in BALTIMORE The 103<sup>rd</sup> Annual NSA Meeting

Join us March 27-31, 2011 at the Sheraton Baltimore City Center for what promises to be one of our best meetings ever!



Plans for Baltimore are well underway and there are a few changes to our regular format designed to provide participants with as many opportunities as possible for information exchange and social interactions. We'll begin every day with an opening lecture and these promise to be both stimulating and thought provoking. Rita Colwell, Distinguished University Professor, University of Maryland, Michael Lesser, Research Professor, University of New Hampshire, and Donal Manahan, Professor, University of Southern California, have all agreed to participate, and each lecture will lead into focused sessions on Shellfish and Public Health, Ocean Chemistry and Shellfish, and Genetics and Genomics, respectively.

Other special sessions are scheduled to cover blue crabs, disease, shellfish restoration (including impacts of oil), shell formation, biofouling, commercial fisheries, broodstock development, abalone restoration, shellfish aquaculture techniques, feeding physiology, clam culture, gastropods, ecological and climate controls of infectious diseases in shellfish populations, carrying capacity modelling and benthic pelagic coupling, conditioning, and introductions and invasives. The individual session organizers have been

busy lining up an outstanding collection of presenters. There will be two focused poster sessions (with refreshments!) and a student-oriented session organized by The Recruits.

We'll also be celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of The Recruits (see article on page 3) and the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Student Endowment Fund Auction.

All of these activities and focused sessions have led the organizing committee to make the bold decision to extend the meeting through Thursday afternoon - and to end with a "Happy Hour". This will allow more time for contributed papers, interaction with colleagues, and social activities.

### ABSTRACT SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS DECEMBER 13, 2010

The Sheraton Baltimore City Center is centrally located and just a short walk from the Waterfront and many of Baltimore's major attractions. The hotel is an attractive venue and boasts some of the finest meeting space available. Given all that, you won't want to miss this one -- registration and abstract submission are available now until December 13<sup>th</sup> on the NSA Web page ([www.shellfish.org](http://www.shellfish.org)); check out all the information on the meeting for details regarding abstract submission and we'll see you all in Baltimore!

Any questions or suggestions, contact Sandy Shumway ([sandra.shumway@uconn.edu](mailto:sandra.shumway@uconn.edu))

### *In this issue:*

- *Industry Perspective*
- *Student Travel and Research Funding Opportunities*

## Recruits' Corner

Hello NSA Students!

Hopefully you found ways to tackle the two biggest challenges of the summer – staying cool (or warm in the winter in the southern hemisphere) and getting your research done. Maxine tackled both in Taiwan this summer where she was busy measuring local oysters'



tolerance to environmental stress. She enjoyed herself while conducting interesting research that she will tell us about at the Annual Meeting in Baltimore, next March.

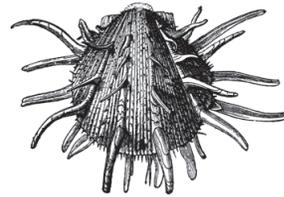
Are you interested in learning about the research activities of other NSA students? Want to share your research experiences with shellfish enthusiasts at similar stages in their careers? The Recruits are here to help students network, so check out the student forum on the NSA Web site. While there, feel free to post interesting tidbits about your research, questions, and solutions to any problems you have encountered. For starters, check out Maxine's post about collecting oysters in Wanggong, Taiwan.

The next NSA meeting will be from March 27-31 in Baltimore, Maryland. This will also be the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary for the Student Recruits! There will be activities celebrating this milestone that will be entertaining for both the past and present students. The scavenger hunt, a popular activity at this year's meeting, will also be returning. Please email us if you have ideas for some hard-to-find items. For those of you presenting your research at the meeting, you may want to think about applying for a Student Endowment Fund (SEF) Travel Award. This award covers either the cost of your conference registration or lodging. Awardees are required to donate half a day to helping the NSA run the conference. Duties assigned to awardees may include managing the sales booth, operating A/V equipment during a session, or helping to set up for the poster session on Sunday. See the accompanying information from the SEF Awards Committee for more details on applying and important deadlines. Students who present are also eligible for the Thurlow C. Nelson Award for best oral presentation or the Gordon Gunter Award for best poster.

Remember, there are several ways to be involved in the conference, even if you don't plan to present. We still need session moderators, and this would be a great position for a student. Shake off your shyness due to inexperience or not knowing anyone! This could be your chance to start a conversation with internationally famous scientists in your field as you introduce them! If you are interested send us an email.

Two other awards presented each year at the annual meeting are the Melbourne R. Carriker Student Research Grant and the Michael Castagna Student Grant for applied research. Both of these grants award the recipient \$1,250 to be applied to their research. The application deadline is November 30<sup>th</sup>. More details and application information are on the NSA Web site. If you have any questions about these and other awards we've listed, suggestions for the Recruits or other concerns, please contact us (sleiner@vims.edu; mchaney@usc.edu).

**Stephanie Reiner and Maxine Chaney**  
**Recruits Co-chairs**



## Student Endowment Fund Travel Awards

The NSA Student Endowment Fund (SEF) provides lodging and registration awards to support NSA students who present reports on their research at annual meetings. The deadline for applications from students seeking travel support to attend the 103<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting, March 27-31, 2011, in Baltimore, MD, is December 20, 2010. This deadline is a week after the abstract submission deadline. Student members please note, in addition to submitting an abstract for the meeting you must complete and submit a separate application for travel assistance by the deadline, above. Completed applications for SEF Travel Awards can be submitted by email to one of the Student Endowment and Awards Committee Co-Chairs, Chris Dungan [cdungan@dnr.state.md.us](mailto:cdungan@dnr.state.md.us) or Marta Gomez-Chiarri [gomezchi@mail.uri.edu](mailto:gomezchi@mail.uri.edu).

In addition to reviewing applications for travel support, the Student Awards Committee also coordinates the evaluation of student presentations for the Thurlow C. Nelson (oral) and Gordon Gunter (poster) Awards. Eligibility for all SEF awards requires students to be NSA members, to present their original research, and to apply with the available application form. Recent graduates may also apply if they present on research performed as students, and received their degree during the 12 months preceding the meeting. Complete information and application forms for all SEF awards can be found at <http://shellfish.org/endow/endowapp.htm>.

**Marta Gómez-Chiarri**  
**Chris Dungan**  
**Student Endowment and Awards Committee**

## Student Research Grants

### Application Deadline: November 30<sup>th</sup>

The National Shellfisheries Association offers two grants to support student research annually. The Melbourne R. Carriker Student Research Grant is a competitive grant that supports promising basic research in the area of shellfisheries while The Michael Castagna Student Grant for Applied Research supports more practical areas of research. Students may apply for both awards, but must submit separate applications that highlight appropriate aspects of the research. Use of the same application for both awards will not be accepted. The applicant must be a student member in good standing and currently enrolled as a Master's or Ph.D. student in a recognized degree granting institution. Students may not apply for an award they have received previously. The deadline for proposal applications is November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

Both awards provide students with \$1,250 in support to be used to purchase supplies and equipment essential to performance of their research. They are neither intended to allow purchase of general items, such as computers, nor to fund travel expenses associated with attending professional meetings. Students seeking travel support to attend NSA meetings should apply separately (see page 2) for money made available through the NSA Student Endowment Fund. It is expected that Student Research Grant recipients will present the results of their research at an annual meeting of the Association and write a synopsis of their research for the NSA *Quarterly Newsletter*.

To apply, send the following as a single pdf file to Past President David Bushek (bushek@hsrl.rutgers.edu); 1. Cover sheet with the applicant's name, professional address, phone number, email address, thesis title, degree being sought (Master's or Ph.D.), date they entered the graduate program, and anticipated graduation date. 2. Project description - 2 page limit plus one page for figures (if needed). Note that any literature cited is not included in the two page limit. 3. Budget (1 page) - Briefly itemize how the award will be spent (e.g., \$150 for shellfish cages and aquarium supplies, \$200 for histology supplies, \$120 disposable pipette tips, \$500 for PCR assays, etc.). 4. Resume (1 page) - List educational background, awards/honors, presentations at meetings, and any publications. 5. Letter of endorsement (1 page) - The student's major advisor must provide a succinct letter of support commenting on the student's research and confirming that the funds are necessary.

Applicants will be notified of the status of their application by January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2011 and awards presented at the Annual Business Luncheon in Baltimore. Additional details are available online at [www.shellfish.org/grants.htm](http://www.shellfish.org/grants.htm) or by simply clicking on the Student Support tab on the NSA Web site. Good Luck,

**Dave Bushek**  
Past President and Student Awards Chair

## Recruits 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration!

- Have you ever received Student Endowment Fund (SEF) support?
- Was your first presentation at an NSA annual meeting as a student?
- Did you ever indulge in a free beverage at an NSA auction?
- Have any of your students presented their research at an NSA meeting?
- Was the first time you met the author of the key papers in your thesis at an NSA meeting?
- Do you own an original copy of an important memoir or book in your field that you won at an NSA auction?
- Did you ever buy or sell anything at the NSA auction?
- Do you go to the NSA auction just to see Sandy's costume?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, then **YOU** can help **US**. As a member of the NSA, you know that students are integral to our Society. We're celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of the NSA Recruits and will be holding the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual NSA-SEF Auction during the 2011 Annual Meeting in Baltimore.

How can you help?

We need pictures of your favorite memories featuring NSA Recruits and past auctions. Help us remember Sandy in a seashell bikini - it was 20 years ago. Pictures and memorabilia from other student-centered NSA activities, such as SEF awards, dance parties, and the sales booth are welcome. If you received an NSA presentation award, consider sending us "then and now" photos. If you're a member of a multigenerational NSA family (your advisor's advisor is / was an NSA member, your advisor is a member, etc.), then send us your "family tree". If you have a special memory or anecdote related to NSA and our student members, jot it down and pass it along. PLEASE send all memorabilia to Maureen Krause (biomkk@hofstra.edu), as soon as possible. To date, NOT ONE member has submitted a photograph, but we know you're out there.

And while you are at it, please start setting aside items to contribute to the auction, particularly any that are appropriate for our 20<sup>th</sup> Auction. Let's raise enough money for the SEF to ensure another 20 years of successful recruitment.

**Maureen Krause**  
Vice-President

## Industry Perspective: Tiptoeing Through The Tar Balls

The Deepwater Horizon oil spill into the Gulf of Mexico is finally over. Assessment of the damage from the spill is not. Shellfish resources across the gulf region took a hit. The question is, how bad is the damage and how long will it persist?



The NOAA Mussel Watch Program and collaborating scientists did a great job in early May of sampling shellfish in order to update the program's database prior to the oil's arrival inshore. Samples were shipped to various labs for eventual analysis so pre-spill background hydrocarbon levels could be determined. Information on the spill's trajectory and the response to the spill was maintained by a number of media outlets. The Gulf Sea Grant Network (<http://gulfseagrant.tamu.edu/oilspill/index.htm>) was especially thorough and has provided timely updates on the effort to close the well, local and regional responses and recovery efforts, the use of dispersants, a variety of other legal issues, volunteer opportunities, seafood safety, human health, and the impact of oil on wildlife. The site has also provided access to and information on maps and map services, contract services, general background and educational information, as well as financial claims information for those affected by the spill.



Each state has faced their own unique challenges with respect to their response to the spill and their ensuing recovery efforts. In Louisiana which was closest to the spill, the situation was the worst. The Mississippi River was used to combat oil inundation into the vast marshes in the Lake Pontchartrain Basin and Barataria estuaries by diverting river water through two different control structures originally built to help control coastal erosion. At the same time, the water levels in the Mississippi River were high due to the annual spring thaw further north. The result has been dead and dying oysters, on both public and private oyster grounds, due to low salinity followed by high summertime water temperatures.

Marsh shorelines in Louisiana were also directly impacted by oil; it appears that the worst of the spill came ashore along the eastern shores of Barataria Bay and the Mississippi River Delta. Visual and sensory surveys suggest that only a low proportion of Louisiana's million acres of public grounds and 300,000 acres of private grounds actually came in contact with the crude. Even so, there is concern regarding dispersed components of the spill which are less obvious to the naked eye, as well as the effects stemming from the

large scale use of dispersants. Commercial and recreational seafood harvests have been closed as a health precaution and samples of a variety of fish and shellfish continue to be taken for organoleptic and quantitative analysis of petroleum contamination. Early reports are promising regarding public health, but the impacts on shellfish health will likely take years to assess. At the same time, numerous fisheries have been negatively impacted as many boats from the commercial fleet joined the BP Vessel of Opportunity Program and were involved in deploying boom and delivering supplies. In addition, shucking houses closed across the area resulting in workers being laid off.

At the Sea Grant Bivalve Hatchery on Grand Isle, located on the center and north side of the island, where President Obama visited twice while the island's and nearby beaches were soiled, sometimes with heavy oil, no elevated hydrocarbon levels and no Corexit dispersant were detected over a ten week period of weekly testing by the LSU Environmental Sciences Department Laboratory. The hatchery's role in oyster recovery, whatever that may be, does not appear to have been compromised as low salinity levels returned to normal. Similarly, the broodstocks in the LSU Oyster Research and Demonstration Farm, representing over ten years of research, do not appear to have been negatively affected. The same cannot be said for other oyster farms and reefs in the state. The annual state stock assessment was reported as poor, nearly mimicking the 2009 report.

The good news is that ripe oysters abound, as reported by the August Dermo sampling east of the River. The river diversion structures, which operated at 8,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) during the spill, have been scaled back to normal summertime operational flows of 1,000 cfs. Thus, there is the potential for a good fall spatfall if optimal salinity and cultch conditions persist. The fall inshore shrimp season was to open on August 16th, which is also the date that most commercial fishing was set to resume for fisheries closed by the spill. If the fishery is as active as usual then hundreds of trawls dragging the bottom will tell the tale of conditions across the Louisiana coast. Hopefully, shrimp and crab boils will resume in back yards across the coast. We could all use a bit of fun right now.

In Florida, molluscan shellfish (clams, oysters) are regulated by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS), Division of Aquaculture ([www.FloridaAquaculture.com](http://www.FloridaAquaculture.com)). Division staff collected pre-impact shellfish samples for baseline characteristics and developed, in conjunction with the FDA, an emergency regulatory response should hydrocarbons from the Louisiana oil spill reach Florida estuaries. The criteria for reopening fisheries following a hydrocarbon closure was less clear as no specific public health standards have been developed for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in shellfish tissues. It was determined that sensory evaluation (sight and smell?) would be coupled

with analytical tests of affected shellfish for contaminants. To date, none of the 39 shellfish harvesting areas in Florida have been closed due to the presence of oil products (sheen and tar balls).

In response to the threat of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, the clam farming community began to prepare for potential impacts. Since May 4, members of the Clam Industry Task Force have met weekly with state agency and university representatives via conference call to discuss plans and concerns. Clam farmers also participated in area contingency planning sessions with Unified Command. Aquaculture leases were identified as environmentally sensitive areas and given a top tier designation (“triple diamond”) for protection. When farmers learned that traditional booming strategies would not be effective for open-water leases, they called for a special planning meeting with the U.S. Coast Guard, Sector St. Petersburg Branch. During which, alternative countermeasures, such as tar ball recovery devices and snares, were identified.

A NOAA model of long-term oil threat indicated a low probability (0-20%) of contamination for the west coast of Florida, where the clam production is centered. Yet, concerns of potential impacts due to hurricanes or winter storms linger. The industry’s biggest challenge now is to reassure buyers and consumers that shellfish and other seafood currently harvested are safe. Misinformation about conditions in Gulf of Mexico waters has unnecessarily affected the industry. A seafood hotline provided by the DACS Division of Marketing gives a daily report. Other Florida Gulf Safe promotional activities, including webcams placed at seafood harvesting, processing and retail locations, can be viewed at the Division’s website, [www.fl-seafood.com](http://www.fl-seafood.com). In addition, faculty at the University of Florida Aquatic Food Products Lab have initiated HOW (Harvest from Open Waters) training for wholesalers and processors to provide additional evidence for the safety of Gulf seafood. The program is basically an updated HACCP approach with additional sensory and analytical screening and verification. More information can be found at the Florida Sea Grant Web site, [www.flseagrant.org](http://www.flseagrant.org).

**John Supan & Leslie Sturmer**

**STUDENT ENDOWMENT FUND  
20<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL AUCTION**

**Tuesday, March 29, 2011**

**It’s never too soon to start setting aside  
your contributions  
to support the SEF.**

## The Latest in Shellfish Artwork



*We all know that shells provide protection to the soft bodied invertebrates they house, so why not use shells to protect your automobile when their former owners are done with them? NSA member Loren Coen spotted this novel armored vehicle recently in Key West, FL.*

## Lou D’Abramo Receives Life-time Achievement Award

During the Opening Plenary Session of Aquaculture 2010 in San Diego, our own Lou D’Abramo (NSA President 2005-2007) was presented with the Distinguished Life-time Achievement Award by the United States Aquaculture Society (USAS). This award is the highest honor bestowed by the USAS and recognizes “an individual who has made contributions and broad impacts throughout his or her career to aquaculture in the United States through research, education, extension, and/or industry development” and recognizes “a long-time commitment of service to aquaculture that is deemed highly significant and enduring”. Lou joins a distinguished group of past recipients: Claude Boyd, Craig Watson, Bill Simco, Ted Smith and John Jensen. Congratulations Lou, we are proud to have you as a member and leader of NSA.



*NSA Past President Lou D’Abramo (left) with Jim Steeby at the USAS Business Luncheon during Aquaculture 2010. Lou and Jim were awarded the USAS Distinguished Lifetime Achievement and Distinguished Service Awards, respectively.*

## Quilt Raffle to Support Student Endowment Fund

A beautiful, full-sized quilt will be raffled off to support the Student Endowment Fund (SEF) during the 103<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting in Baltimore. This is the second of two quilts crafted by the talented Sandra Scarpa using T-shirts depicting marine labs and shellfish organizations from around the country and the world. The T-shirts Sandra worked into her pieces of art were graciously donated by (in alphabetical order) Stan Allen Jr., Dave Bushek, LeRoy Creswell, Joth Davis, Karen and Danielle Kreeger, Matthew Landau, Chris Langdon, Susan Laramore, Paul Rawson, John Scarpa, and Sandra Shumway.

A raffle for the first quilt was held during the Annual Business Luncheon at Aquaculture 2010 this past March and raised almost \$500 for the SEF. Be sure to purchase your raffle tickets while at the 2011 Annual Meeting; if you can't attend the meeting contact any of the NSA officers (listing at right) to purchase tickets. Don't miss out on your shot at winning the second of these two unique and handsome quilts.



## Upcoming Events

**Physiomar10:** October 31-November 4, 2010, Loews Le Concorde Hotel, Quebec City, Quebec, Canada. For more information visit <http://physiomar10.ismer.ca/>.

**International Seafood & Health Conference and Exhibition 2010:** November 6-10, 2010, Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Center, Melbourne, Australia. For more information visit [www.seafoodhealthconference.com](http://www.seafoodhealthconference.com).

**Fifth National Conference and EXPO on Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration:** November 13-17, 2010, Galveston Island Convention Center, Galveston, TX. For more information visit [www.estuaries.org/conference/](http://www.estuaries.org/conference/).

**ICSR '10, International Conference on Shellfish Restoration:** November 17-20, 2010, Doubletree Guest Suites, Charleston, SC, USA. For more information visit <http://www.scseagrant.org/content/?cid=297>.

**2010 Northeast Aquaculture Conference and Expo (NACE):** December 1-3, 2010, Radisson Inn, Plymouth, MA, USA. For more information contact Joe Buttner ([jbuttner@salemstate.edu](mailto:jbuttner@salemstate.edu)) or Craig Hollingsworth ([chollingsworth@umext.umass.edu](mailto:chollingsworth@umext.umass.edu)).

**Delaware Estuary Science and Environmental Summit, Connections - Land to Sea, Shore to Shore & Science to Outreach:** January 30-February 2, 2011, The Grand Hotel, Cape May, NJ, USA. For information visit [www.DelawareEstuary.org](http://www.DelawareEstuary.org).

**Aquaculture America 2011:** February 28-March 3, 2011, New Orleans Marriott, New Orleans, LA, USA. For more information visit [www.was.org](http://www.was.org).

**National Shellfisheries Association, 103<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting:** March 27-31, 2011, Sheraton City Center Hotel, Baltimore, MD, USA. For more information visit [www.shellfish.org](http://www.shellfish.org).

**Eighteenth International Pectinid Workshop:** April 20-26, 2011, Haiqing Hotel, Qingdao, China. For more information visit [www.18ipw.com](http://www.18ipw.com).

**Aquaculture Canada, Culturing Diversity and Success:** May 8-11, 2011, Loews Hôtel Le Concorde, Québec City, Québec, Canada. For more information visit [www.aquacultureassociation.ca](http://www.aquacultureassociation.ca)

**World Aquaculture 2011:** June 6-10, 2011, Natal Convention Center, Natal, Brazil. For more information visit [www.was.org](http://www.was.org).

**Eighth International Conference on Molluscan Shellfish Safety:** June 12-17, 2011, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada. For more information visit [www.gov.pe.ca/icmss2011/](http://www.gov.pe.ca/icmss2011/).

**World Conference on Marine Biodiversity:** September 26-30, 2011, Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Center, Aberdeen, Scotland, UK. For more information visit [www.marine-biodiversity.org/](http://www.marine-biodiversity.org/).

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If you would like to announce a meeting, conference, workshop or publication that might be of interest to NSA members, please contact the *QNL* Editor, Paul Rawson ([prawson@maine.edu](mailto:prawson@maine.edu)).

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