

Shell Museum News

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From the Director

The near future looks nice and bright for the Museum. Perhaps reflecting the general recovery of the American economy after the tragedy of 9/11, Museum attendance and contribution figures for the first quarter of 2002 look very healthy and within the expected range for this time of year. From the more general perspective of its mission, the Museum, since opening in November 1995, has steadily solidified its reputation with the local community, the visiting public, and academia. It has also been quickly reaching major targets set forth through strategic planning.

Strategic planning makes it possible for an organization to establish goals and time frames for their fulfillment. I am glad to report the Museum has, at this point, achieved most of the goals set forth in its Five-Year Long-Range Plan of 1998.

Thanks to the generosity of members and the vision of the board of trustees, in May 2000 the Museum established its Cultural Endowment Fund, as recommended by the 1998 Long-Range Plan. Longtime supporter Dr. Harold M. M. Tovell, who died in May 2001, bequeathed his Sanibel home to the Museum. Proceeds from its sale, and an additional financial gift, went to the fund. In the fall of 2001, the Museum was the beneficiary of a large donation from the Page Camp Trust.

The fast-growing endowment fund, currently consisting of \$757,000, endows the Museum with an invested principal that provides income for possible hard times. A goal of \$3,000,000 has been established for the fund. To regulate the endowment and financial contributions in general, the board of trustees approved, at its March 2002 meeting, a new and comprehensive investment policy for the Museum.

The 1998 Long-Range Plan recommends that the Museum "should engage in the accreditation process [conducted by the American Association of Museums (AAM)] sometime within the next five years." To that end, in November 2001 the Museum applied for a small grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The grant will pay for
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Fund-Raising Campaign Under Way

Members and friends show their support for the Museum in many ways. A continuing success story is the fund-raising campaign currently under way, which kicked off at the end of 2001, and benefits the Museum's educational and collection-based research programs.

In keeping with the mission statement of the Museum, and its commitment to be a unique educational and research institution capable of providing information about mollusks, three important programs were initiated during the past few years. The Museum has offered the three programs on an annual basis but had not sought funding specifically for them in recent years. Donations ensure that the following programs, and a new one also described below, will continue in 2002-2003 and beyond:

- The Museum is in its fourth year of offering a 90-minute to two-hour program for Lee County public school children. The Museum hosts students in grades 2 through



Education docent Lowell Devasure leads Lee County public school students through the Great Hall of Shells. Key exhibits are explained in depth during the children's fully funded field trip.

Photo: José H. Leal

12, and first graders are scheduled during May. The program has grown from 718 students in academic year 1998-1999 to 1,746 students in 2000-2001. The approximate \$10,000 cost of the program covers round-trip school bus service and the \$2 student admission fee (reduced group rate).

- The Museum Evening Lecture Series was initiated in 1996 and is finishing its second season of being jointly sponsored by the Museum and the Sanibel-Captiva Shell Club. The Museum helps

support speaker expenses. There is no admission charge and the public is invited. Each speaker is provided with
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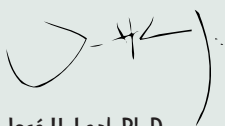
Director...from page 1

expenses of a site surveyor sent by AAM, as part of the first stage of the process, called Museum Assessment Program (MAP 1). We received a formal notice of eligibility in March 2002, and should receive notification of the award in April.

The Museum education program for Lee County public school children, one of our most cherished endeavors, expanded from catering to 718 students in academic year 1998-1999 to 1,746 in 2000-2001. This expansion and the enthusiastic responses we receive from students and teachers are measures of the success of the program, which is led by Anna Marie Nyquist.

The research and collection area of the Museum acts as a magnet for scientists and students interested in performing collection-based research in Southwest Florida. Our mollusk collection is catalogued through a state-of-the-art database system that allows quick searches using any number of combinations of subjects, printing labels, reports, and cross-linked loan management. The 1998 Long-Range Plan calls for replacing the old wood-lined collection cabinets. The Museum has replaced them with all-metal half-height units, which represents an increase in storage space of about 65 percent more than the initial arrangement.

We count on your support to carry all these plans and programs to the next levels!



José H. Leal, Ph.D.
Director



Bert Porreca, 103, poses in front of the sailor's valentine he made and donated to the Museum. He holds his Burr Garden brick, donated in honor of "Mr. Patches" by Marian and David Green.

Fund-Raising Campaign Under Way...from page 1



Illinois State University student Bridget Forsythe is spending a semester internship at the Museum, helping with its program for Lee County school children.

Photo: José H. Leal

room and board for one night at a hotel, and a \$150 honorarium. Hosting speakers from October through April requires an approximate budget of \$3,000 each year.

- The R. Tucker Abbott Visiting Curatorship, a collection-based research fund, was established by the board of trustees to memorialize the Museum's founding director. Each year, interested malacology scholars apply for the weeklong curatorship. The award recipient is selected by the Scientific Advisory Committee to the board, and is provided with an honorarium of \$1,500. The 2001 curatorship was offered to malacologist S. Peter Dance of England.

- In addition, since January, the Museum has been fortunate to have Illinois State University student Bridget Forsythe, a 23-year-old recreation major, spend her final semester volunteering as an intern. She helps the education and group tour coordinator, Anna Marie Nyquist, when Lee County public school children visit the Museum on field trips. Forsythe works directly with the children and is also creating several new games, including games accessible on the Museum Web site.

Forsythe is writing guidelines for future interns, as part of the Museum's educational and collection-based research programs. The guidelines will be linked to college and university Web sites throughout the nation.

Museum director Dr. José H. Leal says there are many opportunities for interns, depending on available funds.

The Museum wishes to thank the following education campaign donors: Virginia Avery, Francis Bailey, Sam Bailey, Caroline Barmettler, Sally Bradford, Jan Braun, Harold Brown, Thomas Bucher, Nancy Bye, Mary Carter, Mary Ann Clark, Dr. and Mrs. C. K. Davis, Peggy DeWire, Ruby Dalke, Betty Farnum, Carol Hanau, Elizabeth and Wesley Hart, James Hartman, Lynne Haubenreich, Mr. and Mrs. Jay Jarrell, Elizabeth Kindt, Mr. and Mrs. David Klann, Mr. and Mrs. Marc Kolber, Kenneth Kraft Jr., Joel Levine, and Catherine Liebermann.

Also, Sally and David Lund, Edith McGuire, Mr. and Mrs. John Meckstroth, Barbara Meeker, Warrin Meyers, Betty Jane Peak, George Rapp, Mr. and Mrs. N. Charles Roe, Klaus Saegbarth, Kathleen Sarkin, Jean and Joseph Sawtelle, Sheila Schreiber, Mrs. Everett Smith, Janice Smith, Claire Sylvester, Barbara and Jack Tarditi, Audrey and Craig Thorn, Leanne and David Trout, C. Hyde Tucker, Margaret and Albert White, and Mrs. J. Howard Wood.

Persons wishing to make a donation may send their tax-deductible contribution to the Museum. If you have questions or want further information, please contact the Museum at 239/395-2233 (note the new area code!), toll-free at 888/679-6450 or e-mail shell@shellmuseum.org.



Museum education docent Joyce Matthys helps a fifth grader during the annual county-wide Infinity enrichment program at The Sanibel School in January.

Museum News

Dr. Leal's calendar is filled with many upcoming trips. From May 12-16, he will be in Dallas at the annual meeting of the American Association of Museums, and he will attend the annual meeting of the Natural Science Collections Alliance in Washington, D.C., from June 6-9. Dr. Leal has been invited to the triennial meeting of the 5th Latin American Congress in São Paulo, Brazil, from June 30-July 4. From July 12-18, he will attend the Conchologists of America Convention in Sarasota, Florida, and he will participate in an International Marine Bivalve Workshop in the Florida Keys during July. Also on his schedule is the annual meeting of the American Malacological Society in Charleston, South Carolina, from Aug. 3-7.

Shells of the Sea, the new children's video, has been selling well in the Museum store and also as an option with the school collection kits. Education docent Howard Schroeder, a retired professor of education at the University of Minnesota at Mankato, suggested listing the video on the school kit info sheet. Volunteers Ed and Vera Goldstein report several educational institutions have been adding *Shells of the Sea* to their orders.

The Museum received a grant of \$1,500 in January from The Bailey Society, the membership arm of the Community Foundation of Sanibel-Captiva. The money enabled the Museum to purchase a digital slide scanner for the collection and research area. The scanner will be used to enhance the existing Web site, newsletter, and Museum Vision Bank.

The Museum's 90 adult volunteers were honored at a luncheon on Jan. 28 at the Sundial Beach Resort on Sanibel. It was sponsored by the board of trustees and hosted by public relations manager Libby Grimm. The volunteers donated nearly 8,000 hours to the Museum during 2001. Charles Veysey, former president of the board of trustees, was thanked for his dedicated service.

On Saturday, April 20, the Museum will again take part in Earth Day celebrations by offering free admission. Sanibel-Captiva Road will be closed from 1 to 3 p.m., from Tarpon Bay Road to near Rabbit Road, and the Sanibel Bicycle Club will lead a group ride on bikes, skateboards, and in-line skates. The celebration, which is organized by the Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation, also involves the City of Sanibel, CROW, Rainbow Road, the Sanibel Bicycle Club, Sanibel-Captiva Audubon Club, Sanibel Inn, and Tarpon Bay
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Volunteers Richard Duerr, Lois Dunnam, and Phyllis Diegel sort and identify fossil shells this past winter in the Museum collection department. The shells, donated by Mr. Duerr, are Miocene fossils from the Florida Chipola Formation.
Photo: José H. Leal

Cooperative Technology at Work

When virtual visitors click on the Museum Web site's library link, they are informed that the Museum library "is available online through the Sanibel Public Library." Web site visitors are then instructed how to locate Museum library holdings.

The staffs from the Southwest Florida Library Network, the Sanibel Public Library and the Shell Museum worked cooperatively to

make access to both of the libraries' holdings available to people all over the world through the Internet.

The Web site notes that the Museum "greatly appreciates the Sanibel Public Library for hosting the Museum's library holdings online."

An understatement, to say the least, according to Museum director Dr. José H. Leal: "Sanibel Library director Pat Allen, her staff, and the

Southwest Florida Library Network were instrumental in helping to bring to completion the online version of our library records. This is like having a dream come true."

He adds, "The Sanibel Library's assistance in this direction ties so well with our goals for making the Museum a truly professional institution. It is a great gift to the Museum.

"Such support, and other obvious positive outcomes, enormously contributes to consolidate, among our community and board of trustees, the perception of our small library as an important service provided by the Museum."

Museum Webmaster and *The Nautilus's* managing editor Tina Petrikas notes, "This system is very versatile. And on our end, we also are able to request articles from other institutions."



University of Frankfurt student Kai Spresny conducts research in the collection department during a short visit to the Museum last fall.

Photo: José H. Leal



The Bailey-Matthews Shell Museum

Phone 888.679.6450 Fax 239.395.6706

Post Office Box 1580

3075 Sanibel-Captiva Road

Sanibel Island, FL 33957

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Calusa Exhibit Update

The above sketch, by Museum staff member Kim Poppalardo, shows the central theme of "Calusa: The Original Shell People." The planned new exhibit is being funded by Museum supporter and former board member Anina Glaize. On April 22, Sanibel-based artists Dee and Luc Century are organizing Island Calusa Heritage Day at the Sanibel Community House. The Museum has been invited to the event to show some of its initial plans for the upcoming exhibit.



Museum director José H. Leal receives a check for \$3,500 from Sanibel-Captiva Shell Club Education Committee Chairman Ralph Moore. The club gives a research grant to the Museum annually.

Museum News...from page 3

Recreation. Collection department volunteers Gloria and Kermit Pearson, who live in Naples, Florida, will represent the Museum during an Earth Day celebration at The Conservancy of Southwest Florida. The event will be in the Conservancy's Naples Nature Center.

A free *Wildlife Coloring Book* will soon be available to resident and visiting children on Sanibel and Captiva. The Museum's section features its wentletrap logo on one page and the other page has a cartoon mollusk and caption written by Sanibel School students.

The Museum is looking forward to co-sponsoring the Sanibel and Captiva Islands Chamber After Hours on May 20. The popular event will be held in the Museum meeting room and is also sponsored by Henderson Franklin Starnes & Holt, P.A.

Kaos Entertainment, a TV production company subcontracted by the Travel Channel, recently interviewed Dr. Leal and shot footage of the Great Hall of Shells. Kaos was filming a story about the 10 best beaches in Florida, of which Sanibel is included. The Travel Channel will air the program in the fall or winter.

The Museum has lost four dedicated supporters. **Rusty Bennett**, and his wife, Jo, spent many volunteer hours working in the collection department. **Bill Payne** was a longtime member. **Rosella Schroeder** volunteered as an education docent, along

with her husband, Howard, who continues in that position. **Sidney Sinow** was a supporter of the Museum. His wife, Ethel, is an exhibit docent in the Great Hall of Shells.

The Museum would like to thank the following people who have joined as Life Members since the summer of 2001: Ms. Sara Beard, Mrs. Sharon Boudeman, Ms. Phyllis Diegel and Mr. Richard Duerr, and Ms. Donna Schubert.

The Museum would like to thank the following donors who recently contributed more than \$1,000 in designated and undesignated funds: the Page Camp Trust, Mr. and Mrs. Sam Galloway, Mrs. Anina Glaize, Mrs. Jo Kohn, the Marmot Foundation, Mrs. Garwin McNeilus, the Sanibel-Captiva Community Foundation, the Sanibel-Captiva Shell Club, Mr. Wil Schlosser, Mrs. Elisabeth Smith, and Mr. and Mrs. John Zimmerman.



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Editor: Libby Grimm
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