



Flippers & Fins

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 1

SUMMER 2010

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- View current patients during daylight hours at the NMMC
- Gift Shop Hours
Tues thru Fri
11am — 3 pm
Saturday
10am—4pm
- Volunteers needed in the gift shop and hospital
- Don't forget to renew your annual membership!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Volunteer Spotlight 2
- Another Record Breaking Year 2
- Director's Message 3
- Stella Update A Sad Ending 3
- Success Stories 4

Big Hopes for New Education and Research Facility

The Northcoast Marine Mammal Center (NMMC) and City of Crescent City are partnering to submit a grant application to California State Parks for the development of a research and educational facility at the NMMC. Funding for the grant was made available through Proposition 84 which earmarked \$93 million for Nature Education Facilities. The grant is highly competitive, but the NMMC is hopeful that the grant will be funded.

The proposed project is the construction of a 25,000 square foot facility that will create a unique experience by integrating state of the art interpretive exhibits, ongoing research projects, and educational outreach. The project will also reorganize and renovate the existing facility into a temporary living quarters for visiting scientists, graduate students, and interns. This will further encourage marine research projects along our remote coastline.

The outside grounds would include life-size sculptures of marine mammals and a life size mural celebrating the Gray Whale with other local marine species that inhabit and migrate along our coastline. The interior would include a working hospital, treatment room, and necropsy room, all of which would be viewable through partial glass floors in the main lobby.

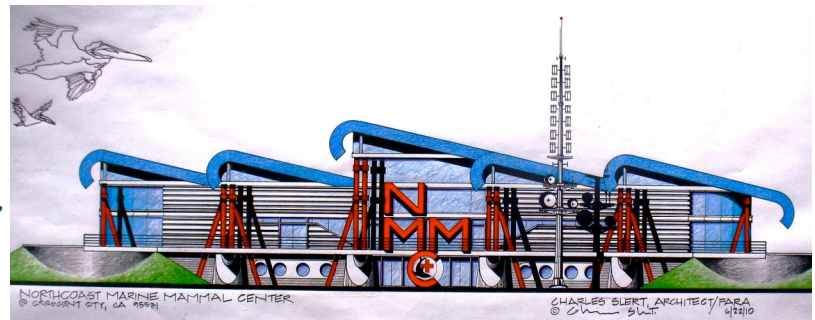
Remote feed videos of research and rehabilitation activities will also be viewable on remote feed HD monitors. In addition, an educational classroom would be

designed and programs would be developed to meet the California Science Standards for local schools to participate in.

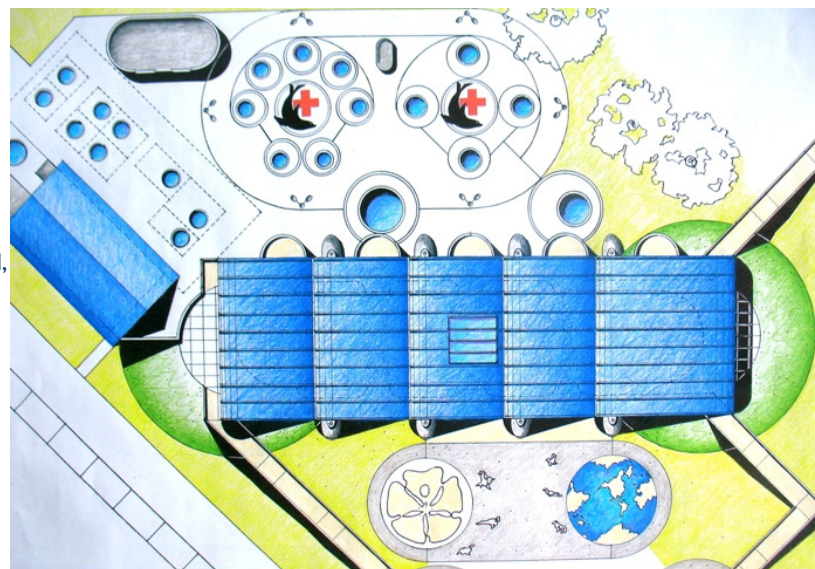
Visitors will be directed to numerous educational exhibits throughout the interior of the new facility which will highlight the stewardship of marine life, such as the effects of ocean debris, ongoing research projects, health trends in keystone species, and the role of local Native

American Tribes as the original environmental stewards of our coastline.

The proposed project would fill a geographic gap for both research and educational facilities and visitors would undoubtedly leave with a greater understanding of the urgency for environmental stewardship.



A glance at the proposed new Research and Educational Facility, designed by award winning Architect Charles Slert. Front view of the building (above) and aerial schematic of overall design concept (below).



Volunteer Spotlight



Amber moved to the area to pursue a degree in Zoology at HSU. She moved from Chicago where she was a head volunteer at an exotic animal rescue. Upon arrival to Humboldt County, her love of marine mammals lead her to become involved with Dawn Goley's Marine Mammal Research and Education Program. Through this program Amber has worked on many research projects involving gray whales, stellar sea lions, and other marine mammals.

Amber has been volunteering for the NMMC for over a year and is the Stranding Coordinator for Humboldt County and can be found on the beaches of Humboldt County accessing and rescuing marine mammals.

Vicky Farr has volunteered for the NMMC since October of 2003. She is currently our Stranding Coordinator, and oversees animal assessments and rescues throughout our response area. She has also served as a shift supervisor and Volunteer Coordinator at the Center.

Vicky wasn't a resident of Del Norte county when she first visited us, but soon moved to the area so that she could volunteer at the Center. Her favorite species that we rehabilitate is the Northern fur seal.

When asked why she started volunteering here, she said "It just felt like home".

Photo courtesy of Lyn Brett



Marlana Garcia started volunteering at the Northcoast Marine Mammal Center during the spring of 2009. During the past two years, our first two harbor seal pups ("Teddy" in 2009 and "Peanut" in 2010) were admitted on her birthday. What a birthday present!

Harbor seal pups are her favorite species to work with, although she has been invaluable during the last year. She has assisted in rescues, releases, animal treatment procedures, providing educational tours during class field trips, as well as the day-to-day activities such as cleaning pens and feeding our patients.



Another Record Breaking Year on the Horizon

Well, we thought we were busy last year.....During 2009, we rescued a record 116 marine mammals. So far during 2010, we have responded to hundreds of distressed animal reports and rescued 79 animals.

Since January 1st, the Northcoast Marine Mammal Center

has rescued 41 California sea lions, 24 Pacific harbor seals, 13 Northern elephant seals, and 1 Guadalupe fur seal.

Although pupping and weaning season has come to an end for harbor and elephant seals, we are increasingly busy with reports of emaciated yearling California sea lions.

Wallace, a Pacific Harbor Seal pup recently admitted into the NMMC.



Director's Message

It is with great sadness that I am stepping down as the Director of the Northcoast Marine Mammal Center. Although I've only been here a little over 14 months, it has been the busiest time of life! Since I've been here, we've rescued 180 animals, including Guadalupe fur seals, Northern fur seals, and a Steller sea lion pup!

In addition, we have initiated a working relationship with Oregon State University's Marine Mammal Institute. We have also submitted numerous grant applications for projects such as a mobile 'seal school' educational

program, facility renovation, our annual operations costs, and the exciting opportunity to build a new research and educational facility on-site.

I have also made a lot of close friends during my time here. It saddens me that I will not be here every day, but I hope to remain an active volunteer and my transition will be gradual. I hope someday to serve on the Board of Directors for the NMMC, moving the Center forward in a positive direction.

Thanks for all of your support, and I am lucky to have served as Director. It has been the opportunity of a lifetime, and I

am glad to have made a difference.

Best Wishes,

Monica Hiner



Stella Update, A Sad Ending



Stella being released back into the wild on March 27th.

Many of you have been following the progress of "Stella", a Steller Sea Lion pup that we have been rehabilitating since last June. She was transferred to the NMMC last June from Oregon. She was only 4—6 days old when she was admitted to the Center.

In March, a group of veterinarians, marine mammal scientists, and staff from the National Marine Fisheries Service Stranding Network participated in several conference calls and decided that she was ready for release. We tagged her with a satellite monitoring device that sent us location data every 24 hours so that we could monitor her location and movement patterns. It appeared by her movements that she was successfully foraging, however, she then began a trek north into Oregon.

Stella restranded on May 3rd in Nesko-win, Oregon, which is just north of Cascade Head. She was stabilized overnight and transferred back to the NMMC on May 4th. During her time at sea, she had failed to forage successfully and had lost over half of her body weight. Sadly, she weighed only 78lbs when she was readmitted into our facility.

While we were sad that she failed to thrive in the wild, we eagerly began nursing her back to health and planning for her future. Due to her inability to successfully forage in the wild, it was

determined that it was in her best interest to place her in a permanent facility. Staff from the Mystic Aquarium in Connecticut were very interested in welcoming her into their facility where they have numerous other Stellers, in addition to "Astro", a male that was rehabilitated at The Marine Mammal Center in Sausalito.

Sadly, three days after her arrival back at the NMMC, Stella lost her fight. For us at the NMMC, we are deeply saddened, but she will hold a special place in our hearts forever.



Stella swimming near Castle Rock National Wildlife Refuge shortly after her release.



Crescent City, CA

The Northcoast Marine Mammal Center is a 501(c)(3) Non-profit Organization dedicated to the rescue and rehabilitation of orphaned, sick, or injured marine mammals.

To report an injured or stranded marine mammal, please call our Stranding Hotline at (707) 951-4722.

424 Howe Drive
Crescent City, CA 95531

Phone: 707-465-6265

Fax: 707-465-6265

E-mail: rescue@northcoastmmc.org

Visit our website at

<http://www.northcoastmmc.org>

Success Stories, Crackerjack and Speedy

Due to the El Nino conditions currently occurring off our coastline, we are continuing to respond to calls of severely emaciated pups and juvenile animals. We started receiving reports of emaciated and lethargic California sea lion pups in late April, and the first two animals we rescued were "Crackerjack" and "Speedy".

"Crackerjack", a small female California sea lion, was rescued in Humboldt County from Trinidad State Beach on April 27th. She weighed 30lbs upon admit into the NMMC and was suffering from malnutrition. She was successfully rehabilitated and released on June 26th, weighing a healthy 53lbs.

"Speedy", an eleven month old California sea lion pup, was rescued from the North Jetty in Humboldt County on May 11th. He was also malnour-

ished and was diagnosed with leptospirosis, a bacterial disease that if left untreated can cause kidney failure and death. After several days of subcutaneous fluids and weeks of antibiotic therapy, he made a full recovery! "Speedy" was successfully released on June 26th after gaining 27lbs during

rehabilitation.

Thanks to all of our dedicated volunteers who not only conduct all animal rescues, but also care for the animals in rehabilitation. Without their hard work and dedication we would not be able to provide the level of care we do.

