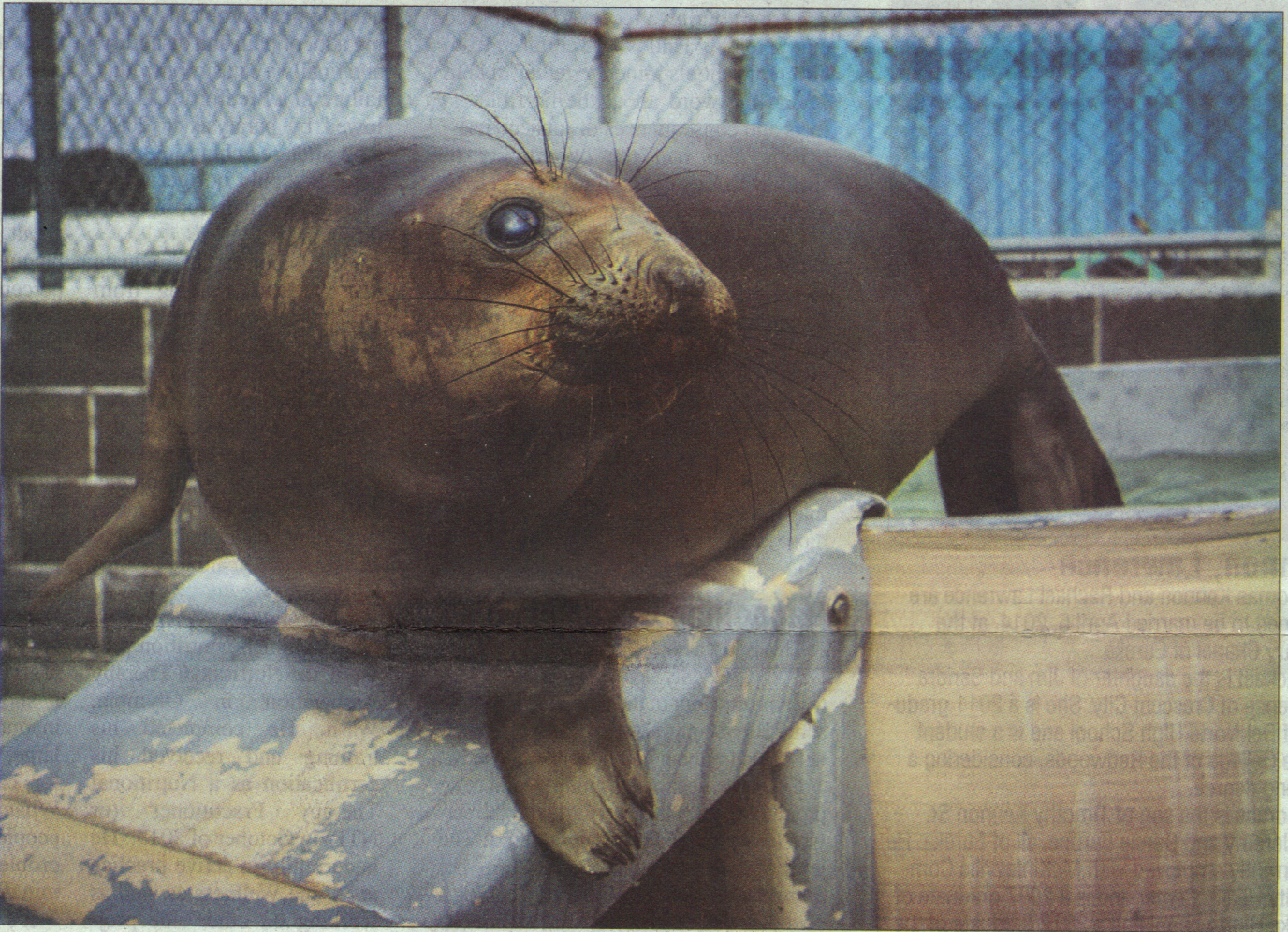


LOCAL BOY MAKES GOOD

# COOLIO IS BOUND FOR PITTSBURGH



Months ago, Coolio the elephant seal was emaciated. Now, "he's eating us out of house and home," said the center's director.

Del Norte Tripligate / Bryant Anderson

## ■ Elephant seal is living large: He's headed for Pittsburgh and a 3,000-pound future

What a difference a few months make.

Last November, the elephant seal yearling lay helpless on Pebble Beach, having wasted away to 140 pounds. Pecked at by birds, he was blind in both eyes.

That's when he was rescued by the Northcoast Marine Mammal Center. Four months and 360 pounds of weight gain later, he's about to be shipped to a climate-controlled saltwater pool in a Pittsburgh aquarium, where he'll eventually expand to about 3,000 pounds.

Things are looking up for Coolio, who currently consumes 30 to 40 pounds of fish a day in Crescent City.

"He's eating us out of house and home," said Dr. Dennis

### Around Del Norte

by Laura  
Wiens



Wood, founder and director of the local center.

But help is on the way. Or rather, Coolio is on his way to help. A lifetime living situation awaits at the Pittsburgh Zoo and PPG Aquarium.

Wood speculates that Coolio's rough start in life was due to the fact that elephant seals only nurse for about a month, when they build up a huge fat store to give them time to learn to hunt on their own.

Not all are successful, however, and when Coolio washed up on Pebble Beach, he couldn't "fight or move away," from avi-



Del Norte TriPLICATE / Bryant Anderson

**Paul Moylett, assistant curator of the Pittsburgh Zoo and PPG Aquarium, checks out Coolio: "He has definitely filled out."**

an predators, Wood said.

He was probably born near Castle Rock a year earlier — "He came without a birth certifi-

cate, unfortunately," said Wood.

"He was probably 250 to 300 pounds at one point and then

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