The Challenge of Environmental Ethics

by Chuck Louch, PTMSC Docent

The degree to which we are all involved in the control of the earth’s life is just beginning to dawn on most of us, and it means another revolution for human thought.

—Lewis Thomas, Lives of a Cell, 1974

“...Continued on page 2
From the Director ...

A Clean Puget Sound by the Year 2020

Governor Gregoire is serious about cleaning up Puget Sound, but it seems her first hurdle in doing that will be convincing people that it is actually in poor health. A recent survey of Puget Sound Basin residents sponsored by the group leading the Governor’s effort—the Puget Sound Partnership—found that 73% of the respondents believe that Puget Sound’s environmental quality is excellent or good.

Those of us working in the field of marine sciences and marine education know that many Puget Sound species are at risk and the web of life is unraveling. Two of the Pacific Northwest’s icons are now on the endangered species list—salmon (two species) and southern resident orca populations. In the early days of the PTMSC, sport fishers regularly launched their boats from the Fort Worden boat ramp and could be seen with a crowd of boats fishing mid-channel for salmon, halibut and ling cod. Now the boat ramp is used primarily by non-fishers.

In a July 2006 report to the Governor, the “Partnership” reports that forty marine invertebrate, fish, bird or mammal species in Puget Sound are listed on Federal or State lists as threatened, endangered or candidates for listing. Assessments of all known species in the Puget Sound region suggest that nearly a thousand species are imperiled, representing ~14% of the total species diversity. Some seabird populations have dropped by 50% since the 1970s and others such as the Western Grebe have plummeted by 90%. Rockfish and other groundfish have declined dramatically in the last 25 years.

The report lists other threats to water quality and quantity, habitat and species including: toxics and contaminants entering the Sound; low stream flows and stormwater surges effecting rivers and streams; and development pressure on forests, shorelines, rivers and estuaries posed by population growth. Our current population of 3.8 million is expected to increase by another 1.4 in the year 2020, and most of these people will live within 25 miles of the shoreline.

Currently there is a gap between the perceived quality of Puget Sound and the imminent threats to its health. The public might not be ready to support a major, coordinated, Sound-wide restoration program if they are unaware of the extent of the problems. This presents a call to action for the PTMSC, other educational organizations/institutions and the media to assist the effort. This was the topic of discussion at a recent PTMSC staff retreat and we are 100% committed to help tell the Puget Sound story. We will use a variety of means to inform and educate our clientele, members, docents and patrons about the fragile conditions of the inland sea where we live.

To learn more about the Puget Sound Partnership or to access the Interim Report to the Governor, visit the Partnership’s website: www.pugetsoundpartnership.org.
New Development Director: JoAnne Heron

“After reading Rachel Carson’s The Sea Around Us and The Edge of the Sea, I wanted to be an oceanographer, even though the sea of rolling Plains grasses was the closest I came until college years at UW. The coast of Washington was seminal in my connection to the marine environment, where, among many other amazing experiences, I watched the stars over the ocean (and one of the first satellites) at remote Shi Shi Beach in 1968 with Hazel Wolf. I am not only excited about my move to Port Townsend, and reconnecting with coastal habitat, but also learning about everyone else’s relationship to the marine environment and PTMSC.”

JoAnne served as executive director for the Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies in Homer, and as development coordinator at the Pratt Museum in Homer, which focused on people’s connection with the marine environment through science, art and history. For the past six and a half years, JoAnne has led the fundraising efforts for Olympic Park Institute, located at Lake Crescent, west of Port Angeles. Her passion for environmental education and preserving wild lands has spanned 35 years. Through drawing and painting, she expresses her love of nature, travel, and the world’s cultures and landscapes. She is an avid hiker and backcountry paddler. JoAnne invites you to call or email to introduce yourself or give her your input on fundraising for the organization. Contact jherron@ptmsc.org, 385-5582 ext. 101.
Explorations for Colorful Deep Coral Communities Off the Olympic Coast

Did you know that off our coasts we have deep sea corals every bit as colorful as in tropical reefs? That, even in perpetual darkness and near freezing temperatures, these plant-like animals obtain their nourishment from under-water snow? That rockfish lounge in red tree coral branches like squirrels in a tree? Learn this and more with a slide and video presentation by Mary Sue Brancato and Ed Bowlby on Saturday, September 30th at 4pm in the Natural History Exhibit.

Mary Sue Brancato and Ed Bowlby both work for the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary and have graduate degrees in marine biology. They co-lead the recent expedition to explore for deep sea communities with robotic videos. Mary Sue’s background is in marine invertebrates and aquatic toxicology. Ed’s background is with marine wildlife and nearshore ecosystems.

Admission: Members $3 adults/$2 youth; nonmembers $5 adults/$3 youth.

UW Paleontologist Bax Barton to Talk about Recent Mammoth Finds in Washington

In February 2005, a rancher along Wenas Creek near Selah Washington was having a road built on his property when construction equipment hit a large bone. Intrigued, he contacted regional geologists who tentatively identified the bone as the humerus (front leg bone) of a mammoth. By the summer of 2005 paleontologists from Central Washington University and the University of Washington had formed a research team and a full scale dig was underway. To enlist help and provide a unique hands-on experience for students and teachers on summer break, the team formed the Wenas Creek Mammoth Investigation Field School. Over the past two years, students have worked alongside researchers to determine the age of the bones, learn about the environment the animals lived in and search for additional specimens.

Mammoth specialist Bax Barton, Curator of Special Collections in the Quaternary Research Center at UW is research faculty for the Wenas Creek investigation. We are excited to announce a special lecture by Bax and his associate Jake Shapley on Sunday, October 22nd. They will describe the work taking place on this ongoing paleontological dig and bring us up to date on what is known about the lives and times of the mammoths that once inhabited Washington State. This program will take place at in the Natural History Exhibit at 4pm. Lecture fees are $5 for adults, $3 for youth ($3 for member adults, and $2 for member youth). Earlier this day (time yet to be determined) Bax and Jake are inviting people to come to the Bone Museum and, with the help of volunteers, to sort through crushed mammoth bones and learn more about this fascinating subject.

Humpback and Blue Whales in the North Pacific: their Status, Movements, and Underwater Behavior

For decades after humpback and blue whales were commercially hunted, many feared that their numbers had been reduced to the point that extinction was inevitable. Off the coast of California, Oregon, and Washington, recent research had revealed a surprisingly large population of humpback and blue whales, representing the highest concentration of blue whales since whaling days.

Join John Calambokidis, one of the founders of Olympia-based Cascadia Research who began documenting the existence of these populations in the 1980s, as he shares some of the exciting recent discoveries on these species. This includes results of ongoing research attatching instruments to their backs using a suction-cup to gain access to their underwater world. He will share information on the movements and behavior of these species from long-term tracking of identified whales and show new video footage taken from a Crittercam on a blue whale showing them feeding and vocalizing under-water. He will also discuss the preliminary results from SPLASH, an international collaborative study of humpback whales throughout the North Pacific, which has involved more than 50 research groups.

This program will be held on Friday, November 10th at 7:30pm in the Natural History Exhibit. Lecture admission is $5 for adults and $3 for youth ($3 for adult members of PTMSC and $2 for youth members). For more information call the PTMSC at 385-5582.
**Where’s the MSC Pen?**

Regular Octopress readers will notice that there is no separate MSC Pen volunteer newsletter in this issue. The “Sea Pen” has been at least temporarily retired. Volunteer profiles and other articles of interest to volunteers will continue to be included in the Octopress, just not as a separate publication. We are exploring new ways of communicating with and about our dynamic group of volunteers. All ideas are welcome! Jean Walat, Volunteer Coordinator.

**Featured Volunteer: JAMIE PARKER**

When I first started as Volunteer Coordinator last September, it was fairly easy to miss Jamie Parker among a sea of volunteers, most of them new to me, because he is quiet and reserved. However, I soon noticed that Jamie’s name appeared frequently whenever there was physical work to be done. It didn’t really matter what—helping set up the volunteer gathering, showing up every week for homecrew, signing on to a second home crew when the need arose, or hauling landscape waste to the dump, Jamie was always ready to lend a hand. Jamie doesn’t go for the big glory tasks, but the ones in the background, the ones that any organization has to have done in order to operate.

Like many quiet people, Jamie is full of surprises. He was a physics and math major in college, then entered the Army and served as a helicopter pilot. He later had a long career as a nurse anesthetist, and served as President of the Hawaii Association of Nurse Anesthetists. He is also a retired commercial pilot of fixed wing aircraft. He’s an experienced camper and kayaker, favoring inflatable kayaks popular in Hawaii because they can be transported by plane between the islands.

A native of Wenatchee, WA, Jamie moved from Hawaii to a five acre home site on Discovery Bay about four years ago. He got involved with the Center after seeing an article in the newspaper asking for volunteers to paint the Marine Exhibit building in 2004, and has been helping ever since. He is the kind of willing volunteer without whom the Marine Science Center literally could not exist, since we could never pay for all of his ‘behind the scenes’ services.

Besides the Marine Science Center, Jamie volunteers with the Ft. Worden Coast Artillery Museum, Habitat for Humanity, the NW Salmon Coalition, and as a volunteer preparer of income taxes. He thinks that the PT Marine Science Center has an important role in educating children and the public about the environment, and says that working with the Center is one way that he can contribute something positive towards conservation of the natural world. Thanks, Jamie, for what you bring to the Marine Science Center.

**New Interactive Exhibit in the NHE**

**Animal Song Exhibit**

Each of the birds seen along our shores has a characteristic song, and so of course do marine mammals. But how many of them can you recognize? This fall we’re working hard on a new interactive exhibit developed and built by two highly skilled volunteers that lets you test your knowledge of animal sounds. Cabinet-maker Richard Inman and electronics engineer Otto Smith put their heads together to design a beautiful and functional unit that will let you match 10 animal calls with the animals that make them. Even better, we will be able to reprogram the micro-chips that store the animal sounds, letting us update the exhibit with new animal calls at a later time. We intend to have our new exhibit on-line by mid-September. We hope you’ll come in and see if you can recognize the song of a black turnstone or an elephant seal!

**Kids’ Corner**

This past summer the new Kids’ Corner in NHE has been a magnet for young children, and some not so young. A small table and chairs, donated by an anonymous volunteer, is just the right size for a tray of rocks, bones and feathers to explore and a basket of children’s books from the Literacy Council of Jefferson County. We like it!

**Seth Bender Memorial Scholarship Fund**

PTMSC’s hands-on Marine Science and Natural History camps provide educational opportunities for boys and girls ages 8–18. This scholarship fund, established in memory of Seth Bender, provides tuition assistance for low-income families.

We sincerely thank the following who have contributed since our last issue: Elsie and Hank Kimball, Alan Rammer, Barbara Adler and John Nemerovski.

Contributions to the scholarship fund are always accepted and can be sent to: Seth Bender Memorial Scholarship Fund, Port Townsend Marine Science Center, 532 Battery Way, Port Townsend, WA 98368.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

**NOVEMBER 24 & 25**

Don’t miss the Annual Thanksgiving Weekend Gift Shop Sale at the Natural History Exhibit.

Get your holiday shopping out of the way early.

There will be Fish Printing noon–4pm each day!

**PROTECTION ISLAND FALL MIGRATION CRUISES**

**SATURDAYS, 1 PM TO 4 PM**

**OCT. 7, 14, 21, 28**  **NOV. 4 & 25**  **DEC. 31**

Tickets: $50 per person ($45 for PTMSC, Burke Museum, Audubon or WOS members)

Reservations and information: (360) 385-5582, (800) 566-3932 or cruises@ptmsc.org

Discounts are available for children and groups
Living and Working in the Middle East

by Anna Bachmann—former PTMSC staff

Living in a city like Amman gets depressing after awhile … the noise, the traffic, the seemingly endless miles of concrete … I’m not really a city girl at heart. Recently I had the opportunity to travel to Aqaba, the southernmost city in Jordan and the only port Jordan has on the Red Sea. I jumped at the chance to get out of Amman. In Aqaba, I had my first opportunity to go snorkeling … actually I’ve done it before in the Pacific Northwest, but I didn’t like it … all that gear you had to wear to protect yourself from the cold water made me feel claustrophobic … but snorkeling on the Red Sea was an entirely different matter. I loved it! … especially since I used to work at the Port Townsend Marine Science Center and have seen hours of educational videos on coral reef ecosystems. Finally, a chance to see these animals with my own eyes!

We had to drive south of the city to find a nice private beach (at the public beaches in town a woman in a bathing suit would cause quite a stir … the men around here don’t get to see a lot of naked female flesh). Also, just south of town, right after the port, is the Jordan Marine Science Center and Aquarium. Of course, that warranted a stop. It is a small facility and looks a bit run down (a bit like the PTMSC before its renovation!) … but the tanks were in good shape and the animals looked healthy. Unfortunately, the educational posters they had, though colorful, were mostly in English (it is an Arabic country after all) and their tanks were not properly labeled … many had no labels at all.

In fact, the educational component seems to be almost completely lacking and there was no one there to do any interpretation. I kept thinking about how we ran things at the PTMSC … and realized how important volunteers are in making an exhibit like this come alive. Walking into a place like that without anyone to show you around and introduce you to these amazing animals is really a terrible waste and a missed opportunity.

And Jordan really needs to work on their public awareness as far as their environment goes. The other day I was walking in Amman along a road following the contours of a steep hill. Three guys were unloading the back of a pick-up truck full of garbage and just tossing it all over the edge of the road onto the steep hillside … in broad daylight and no one around seemed to care. Someone should probably say something to them, but my lack of ability to curse someone out in Arabic for such behavior makes me a little too shy sometimes!

Anyway, living and working here in the Middle East on environmental issues makes me realize just how far we have come in the U.S. in the effort to raise the environmental awareness of the general public. You guys at the PTMSC probably don’t realize what a vital part you play in that process, but without you, the behavior of the general public towards the natural world would probably be vastly different.

Anna Bachmann is the former volunteer coordinator at the PTMSC and is now based in Amman, Jordan and working for an Iraqi environmental group called Nature Iraq. Despite all the unrest inside of country, Nature Iraq is moving forward on several interesting new projects (doing a biodiversity survey of Kurdistan, creating a national park in the marshlands of southern Iraq, building a green village in the Central marsh, and lots of capacity building projects on the environment). You can follow Anna’s activities on her weblog, Sophia’s Peace Work: peacework.blogspot.com.
NEW & RENEWING MEMBERS

Thanks! To our New & Continuing Members! The following folks have either joined or renewed their PTMSC membership since the Summer ’06 Octopress was sent!

STUDENT
Marie Wright

INDIVIDUAL
Patt Ayers
Bud Babcock
Hyatt Barnes
Gladys Barry
Loren Clark
Barbara Cook
Marcia Jones Hartshorn
Larry Heaton
Caroline James
Judy Larimore
Gerald Larson
Sallie Luers
Stu & Pat MacRobbie
Cheryl Maglosky
Stephen Murphy
Moh O’Hanlon
Paula Orkand
Rex & Reva Bates
San San Ying
Woodbury

PTMSC membership since the Summer ‘06

NEW & RENEWING MEMBERS

Jeffrey Boyles
Byron Rot
Karen McBeth

Archaeology Day at Discovery Park
“Tsunamis, Sewage, and Salmon”
Sat. October 14, 10am–2pm  Free!

Specialists from the Burke’s’ archaeology division and Seattle’s Department of Parks and Recreation conduct a day filled with exciting tours and activities. Find out what tsunamis, sewage, salmon, and archaeology have to do with each other. Learn who lived at Discovery Park thousands of years ago. Discover the geological history of the West Point Peninsula. Try your hand at archaeology activities for all ages. Co-sponsored Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation. Check in at the Discovery Park Visitor Center.

Many Thanks are due …

Tim Carpenter at the Seattle Aquarium for ten Pacific Spiny Lumpsuckers.
Kathryn Edens of Microsoft for donating software and operating systems for our new computer network.
Port Townsend Rotary, Admiralty Audubon and the Geology group for their donations towards a cordless sound system.
Leslie Aickin and Kitty Reed for putting together a brochure on the geology of Fort Worden.
Katie Glessing for her expertise.
Karen and Henry Nichols for their support.
Karen DeLorenzo, Dan and Soozie Darrow and Johanna King for hosting our Puffin Cruises.
Richard Inman, and Otto Smith for our new bird song exhibit.

October Cooking Classes at The Green Eyeshade

“Specialties of the House” is the theme for this year’s cooking classes at the Green Eyeshade. All classes are from 7–9pm and are a fundraiser for the PTMSC. Let our local chefs’ “specialties of the house” become your own specialties. The line-up of featured chefs is:

Tuesday, Oct. 3rd
Kris Nelson, Sirens, salads and appetizers

Tuesday, Oct. 10th
Tim Tocatlian, T’s Restaurant, entrees

Tuesday, Oct. 17th
Arran Stark, new caterer specializing in local fresh farm products, entrees

Tuesday, Oct. 24th
Heather Polizzi, Otter Crossing, desserts, including specialty crepes

This is our fourth year in offering cooking classes. Tickets will be $25 per person for PTMSC members or $85 for all four classes for members and $30 per person class for nonmembers.

If you attended any of the previous PTMSC cooking classes, you’ll know you don’t want to miss a single class. Sign up early, as space is limited to only 20 per class. All proceeds go towards funding PTMSC programs. Please call 385-5582 or e-mail info@ptmsc.org for reservations.

WAT’ S NEW AT THE BURKE
YES, I WANT TO BE A MEMBER!!!!

You can support the mission of the 
Port Townsend Marine Science Center—to promote a greater 
understanding of the marine sciences—by becoming a member 
or by renewing your membership.

YES, I WANT TO BE A MEMBER!!!!

Check if this is a: ☐ New Membership or ☐ Renewal

Name___________________________ Phone________________ e-mail__________________

Address______________________ City____________________ State______ Zip__________

☐ $15 Student ☐ $75 Friend ☐ $500 Benefactor
☐ $25 Individual ☐ $100 Sustaining ☐ $1000 Sponsor
☐ $35 Family ☐ $125 Business/Professional ☐ $250 Octopress Sponsor

I’m paying by: ☐ Check ☐ Credit Card: ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard

_________________________________     __________________________________
Name as it appears on the credit card Credit Card #   Exp. Date

Please mail this form to: PTMSC, 532 Battery Way, Port Townsend, WA 98368

Student & Individual
◆ Unlimited free admission to the Marine Science Exhibit and Natural History Exhibit
◆ PTMSC Octopress newsletter
◆ 10% discount on all regular priced merchandise at our Gift Shop
◆ Discount admission to all PTMSC events: Protection Island Cruises, Speaker Series, etc.
◆ Reciprocal member privileges at the Burke Museum
◆ PTMSC bookmark
◆ Monthly e-mail notification of upcoming events
◆ Recognition in the Octopress newsletter
◆ Unlimited use of the PTMSC library
◆ Advance notice of programs & events

Family
◆ All of the above plus unlimited free admission to the Marine Science Exhibit and Natural History Exhibit for your family
◆ Tuition discounts for the PTMSC Hands-On Summer Science Camps

Patron
◆ All of the above plus 2 free admission tickets for friends

Friend
◆ All of the above plus 6 free admission tickets for friends and/or associates

Sustaining
◆ All of the above plus 10 free admission tickets for friends and/or associates

Business/Professional
◆ All of the above plus a link from our Web site to yours

Octopress Sponsor
◆ All of the above plus a business card ad in the Octopress newsletter

Benefactor & Sponsor
◆ All of the above and recognition in the Annual Report

Our sincere thanks for your tax-deductible contribution!