Bart Oxley Honored with Virginia Welch Memorial Award

This edition of Between the Tides marks a changing of the “tides” as Jenna Kinghorn takes the helm from Bart Oxley as editor. The Friends of Fitzgerald were delighted to honor Bart’s eighteen years of work as a volunteer naturalist, board member, and editor of this newsletter by bestowing him with the Virginia Welch Memorial Award at the Friends’ annual volunteer celebration on September 10th. This is the second time we have given out this award to honor one of our volunteers for their outstanding contribution to Fitzgerald Marine Reserve.

“Bart has done an incredible job of writing and editing the newsletter four times each year. Under his guidance, Between the Tides has become one of the best newsletters of any park,” says Mary DeLong, President of the Friends of Fitzgerald Marine Life Refuge. “Bart was always on the lookout for interesting stories whether they were about invertebrates, humans or the park itself. He has done a fine job of chronicling all the aspects of the Reserve.”

Bart brought to Between the Tides his UCLA journalism background and five years of publishing a company newspaper for the Owens-Illinois Glass Company, where he became Personnel Director of the Oakland plant and eventually Management Training Coordinator for its West Coast facilities. He retired in 1983 after 40 years with the company, and volunteered as an Angel Island docent from 1984 to 1987. In 1988 he took Bob Breen’s class in intertidal interpretation and began fifteen years of leading tide pool tours. He also began editing Between the Tides in 1988.

Bart has published two books of memoirs. One features the life of transient workers in Northern California harvests in 1939. The other contains gripping stories about convoy crossings of the sub-infested Atlantic during his service in the British Merchant Marines and other WWII adventures he had in the US Navy. He has published short memoirs in GRIT Magazine and Reminisce.

On Friday, December 16, the Reserve staff and Friends are pleased to offer a Night Tide Pooling Experience out on the reef. The reef is a different place after dark, and these night tours are rare and magical events.

Participants must be at least 10 years old and in good physical shape to navigate the reef. Youth under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an adult.

Wear warm clothing and sturdy shoes with non-slip treads and bring a flashlight or headlamp. Dry socks for the drive home are highly recommended!

The tour will start promptly at 5 p.m. at the Ranger Station in Moss Beach and will conclude at 7 p.m.

If you would like to take part in this very special flashlight tour, contact the Reserve staff at (650) 728-3384. Leave a message with the number of people in your party and a phone number for a confirmation call. Call soon! Participation is limited to 20 and is on a first-come, first-served basis.
Longtime Docent Joan Maxwell Remembered
By Gerald R. Maxwell

Joan Maxwell died October 23, 2005 after a long struggle with cancer. Joan was a Friend who with her husband Jerry took one of Bob Breen’s docent training classes. She served as a volunteer naturalist for 10 years, and with her husband Jerry specialized in giving tide pool tours to third grade children. Joan loved the children and included a strong conservation message while she taught them about the animals in the Reserve. Joan was an excellent swimmer and tennis player, but was forced to stop giving tide pool tours after breaking her wrist in a 1999 tennis accident. Joan’s other volunteer activities included working at Ano Nuevo, logging 1200 hours over a ten-year period; and cleaning beaches and trails at Bean Hollow Beach and Pebble Beach, where she also served as a docent. Joan is survived by her husband Jerry, two sons, and two granddaughters. Her ashes will be spread by her family into her beloved Pacific Ocean.

A Change of “Tides”: Bart Oxley Hands Over Newsletter

Effective with this issue of the Between the Tides newsletter, Jenna Kinghorn, who joined the Tides staff last spring, will become editor, replacing Bart Oxley, who has resigned the position after eighteen years as editor.

Jenna, a Moss Beach resident for fifteen years, now lives in Montara with her new husband, Morgan Conrad. Jenna is a technical writer with a background in Science Writing. A graduate of Beloit College in Beloit, WI, where she received a BA, she has published several articles, contributed chapters to a Nature Company book called Nature Walking, and published a pocket guide to seashore life for children. She attended Sabbie Hopkins’ course in docent training several years ago and serves as a volunteer naturalist in the tide pools.

As a new editor, she is looking forward to working with docents and hopes to hear from newsletter readers. “I’d love to hear anyone’s ideas for articles or artwork for the newsletter.” Email her at tydpoolz@comcast.net, or drop her a line at our post office box.

Jenna is a dedicated scuba diver and travels the world pursuing this activity.

— Bart Oxley

When I approached Bart Oxley earlier this year about writing articles for Between the Tides, I was intimidated. He’d been the editor for nearly two decades, he seemed to know everyone in the Friends organization on a first-name basis, and his energy and enthusiasm were boundless.

“You’ll love working with him,” Mary DeLong reassured me. “He encouraged me with great compassion when I first started writing for the newsletter.”

Bart was also incredibly well-organized. “Bart has always been very conscientious, right from his first day as a student,” Bob Breen remembers. “He always wanted to do the best job possible.”

So I was simultaneously flattered and terrified when a few months later Bart asked if I was ready to take on the editorship. “He’s been a great editor,” Ranger Steve Durkin summed up everyone’s feelings when Bart announced his retirement to all the newsletter columnists. “His editing has helped improve my writing.”

Although everyone has made me feel very welcome, I’m not sure I’ll ever be able to fill the big rubber wading boots that Bart leaves behind him. But I am looking forward to getting to know more Friends as I take over the job of chronicling the goings-on at the Reserve.

I’m also looking forward to experimenting a bit with the format and content of this newsletter. You’ll notice that this issue is centered around the theme of “community.” What themes would you like to see us explore in future issues? Do you have artwork you’d like to contribute? Maybe you’d like to see some of your thoughts published in an article or Letter to the Editor? I look forward to hearing from you!

— Jenna Kinghorn
Communities in Our Reef
By Bob Breen
The concept of community is an important one in the study of ecology. There are a lot of different definitions of community, but all are built on several key ideas about species composition among plants and animals.

Each community member has a role, as in human society. Plants are like farmers in human society, they are producers. Animals are consumers, either herbivores that eat plants, or carnivores that eat other animals.

It's the interactions of plants and animals that join them into a community.

Some populations within a community are small, some populations large, but when you remove a segment of the community the resiliency of the community can change and then a catastrophe can leave almost nothing. So the concepts of community and biodiversity are directly related.

Some famous studies have been done removing a keystone predator from a community. The sea otter is one example; where sea otters have been wiped out, the sea urchin population has boomed, and the sea urchins have in turn nearly wiped out the kelp beds, throwing their whole ecological community into imbalance. Another famous study removed the ochre sea star from the intertidal zone and the mussel beds took over.

There are several distinct communities within the intertidal zone at the Reserve. The mussel beds are one community; they support brittle stars, ribbon worms, amphipods, and crabs, some species of which are found only in mussel beds. The sea grass flats are a very different community, and the tide pools filled with turban snails and hermit crabs are yet another community. You can have a whole community within a tiny space - the nailbrush algae supports a whole community of flatworms, mollusks, and crustaceans.

One of the issues that makes communities difficult to study is that the interrelationships of plants and animals are not always obvious. There's a relatively new concept of guilds. These are groups of different organisms whose feeding methods overlap. This means their roles are somewhat interchangeable, so you can remove some without seeming to have any impact on the community. But if you remove too many, the community may collapse. In a guild, one type of organism may dominate because it has an advantage in a certain situation. Mussels and clams are both in the "guild" of filter feeders, for example, but mussels better survive in the surf zone of the Reserve.

Rangers Report
By Supervising Ranger Steve Durkin
When I think of the word community, many different images and feelings about what community really means come to mind. In the marine environment of the Reserve, the many plants and animals that call the Reserve home share this very special place and form a community. Each of these organisms fulfills a role and has their niche within the community. Some live in harmony; others are struggling for limited resources such as space. Each has evolved and specialized in many different ways in order to acquire the nutrients and gas exchange that they need to survive. The eastern Pacific shoreline is a very dynamic environment. Through time, nature has created a balance in which these organisms live and form this community.

Today, we have inherited this amazing Reserve. Each of us has our roles and responsibilities for our survival, but we also have the responsibility to protect the Reserve and its resources. When I look around me and at my community, I am encouraged by the efforts of so many towards the protection of the Reserve. The staff's role is to work with the community ensuring the Reserve's survival. Our larger community includes the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, the California Department of Fish and Game, The Marine Mammal Center, and Julia Bott and the San Mateo County Parks Foundation. So many individuals contribute their talents for the community effort at the Reserve - just to name a few, Robbie Hopkins, Leah and Marsha Cohen, Darrell Vannelli, and high school student Sonia Singhal. During my post at FMR, I have worked to build relationships with the neighbors of the Marine Reserve, and the community of Moss Beach. One of my aspirations is to involve everyone in our community in protecting the Reserve and its resources.

We are fortunate to have a dedicated Board and so many members of the Friends. Currently, there are 192 members in the friends group and 49 active naturalists who provide guided tours, visit local schools, and assist with scientific research. This support builds a relationship and promotes stewardship empowering our community to sustain the diverse marine life found here.

Centuries ago, the Ohlone people lived in the Reserve and struck a balance with nature, and we also have this opportunity. If we follow the example of so many in our community, who are currently working towards the protection of the Reserve, we will ensure its survival for current and future generations.
What It’s Like to Volunteer as an FFMLR Docent

By Jenna Kinghorn

Living in Moss Beach, I spent more than a decade enjoying the Fitzgerald tide pools on my own before I became a docent. I envied the volunteer naturalists we sometimes met when I dragged my friends and relatives down to the tide pools in search of bat stars, ochre stars, hermit crabs and owl limpets. I joined the Friends and read this newsletter, and every time it announced a docent class, I grumbled because it was always in the morning on a weekday, a time when I had to work.

So when a few years ago they announced a docent class would be held on Saturday mornings, I leaped to register for it. Over the weeks of the class, I re-read my reef creature identification books and took copious notes during Sabbie Hopkins’ fascinating weekly lectures. I crawled through the tide pools with my mentor and flagging down the rangers to ask them questions. I bought Ivan Parr’s waterproof intertidal life ID card and tucked it into my jeans pocket, put on a pair of knee-high rubber boots, and waded into giving tours of the reef.

The first couple of years I worked mainly on weekends as a roving naturalist. I spoke to visitors about our different sea stars, how barnacles eat with their feet, and how limpets trap water under their shells to survive low tides.

I especially loved interacting with families that included children. Eighteen months ago I started taking elementary school students on reef tours on weekdays. It turned out that some of the 3rd and 4th graders I’ve taken on tours had never seen the ocean before; they were excited by seeing waves, and went over the moon when I introduced them to hermit crabs.

Docenting has its challenges, of course. I often find myself rounding up scattered students and chaperones, trying to get them to turn their attention to the ochre star or sea urchin I’ve just found. Usually they are huddled in groups of two or three looking at hermit crabs or giant green anemones or other treasures they have found. More energetic groups give me a good workout as I try to keep up with the kids. Some days I hear myself repeating again and again, “Don’t pick anything up!” and “Please don’t poke the anemones!”

Afterwards, as I herd them off the reef and towards the parking lot, I ask them what they liked the best. Some kids name a particular reef dweller they met: a sea star, a sea urchin, a hermit crab. A few will mention that they learned something about camouflage, or the food web, or how important it is to prevent water pollution. Others shake their heads, unable to come up with a single answer, and say, “Everything. This is the best field trip ever.”

Friends Play New Roles

Mary DeWolf has recently begun the process of training other Friends to take over some of the many jobs she performs.

Beginning in September, Carol Ferguson took over the role of Merchandising Coordinator. “When asked if I would be interested in taking on the Merchandising job I thought that with my background in retailing and banking this was something I could do.” Carol’s tasks as Merchandising Coordinator include ordering, stocking, and storing the merchandise sold in the Visitors Center, depositing the cash from the sales, and tracking and reporting to the Treasurer all the merchandising activity. “Displaying the items for sale is a lot easier with the recent improvements at the Visitors Center!” Carol has been a docent for 3 years and lives with her husband and one son in El Granada. She is open to suggestions, and can be reached by email at carol.ferguson@comcast.net.

In January of 2006, Marsha Cohen, who became a docent through her mother Leah Cohen, will assume the responsibilities of Membership Secretary. Marsha’s duties will include receiving and processing all new membership applications and sending out renewal letters. “I won’t know all the specifics of the job until I really start it,” Marsha says. She will be closely involved in efforts to increase our membership, and welcomes ideas about how to increase or better serve our membership. You can reach Marsha by email at ddvannelli@yahoo.com.

The Friends are now looking for a new Treasurer. The position takes an average of an hour a week, with more time needed in January and February during tax time. Contact Mary DeWolf at mdewret@comcast.net if you are interested.
Join in the Fun and Become a Docent

Want to learn more about the natural history of the Reserve? Interested in spending a few hours each month sharing the fascinating life histories of our reef dwellers with the thousands of kids and adults who visit our tide pools every year? Become a docent and help the Friends spread our message of stewardship and conservation. If you are physically able to navigate the rocks and reef, and are over 17 years old, consider signing up for our next docent training class.

**Saturdays from 9 am to 1 pm from January 14 through March 25, 2006 in Half Moon Bay**

There will be nine classes held over the 11-week period. Training includes classroom lectures with slide shows about the marine life, geology, and history of the reserve, and hands-on training in identification of marine life in the classroom, plus six hours of field trips out on the reef. You'll be matched up with an active docent who will mentor you and you’ll have the opportunity to “shadow” docents for some on-the-job training until you are comfortable leading your own tours. **Need additional info?** Visit our website at [www.fitzgeraldreserve.org](http://www.fitzgeraldreserve.org) or call 650-917-8806.

**Ready to sign up?** Please fill out this form and mail it along with your $35 check (payable to FFMLR) to the address below.

**FFMLR Docent Class, 26635 Taaffe Road, Los Altos Hills CA 94022 -4336**

Name: ____________________________
Address: ____________________________ Zip: ____________
City: ____________________________ Email: ____________________________
Phone: ____________________________
Where did you hear about the class? ____________________________

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**Friends of Fitzgerald Marine Life Refuge**

Membership Secretary, PO Box 669, Moss Beach, CA 94038 -0669

When you donate to FFMLR, you...

- Protect and preserve a remarkable area.
- Support educational and interpretive services to the public and youth groups.
- Encourage educational and research programs at the Reserve.
- Provide special programs to our members.
- Receive a year’s membership in the Friend’s organization.
- Publish and distribute the quarterly newsletter, “Between the Tides”.

Enclosed is my donation: □ $1000 □ $500 □ $250 □ $100 □ $50 □ $25 □ Other ____________

Name ____________________________
Address ____________________________
City: ____________ State ______
Zip: ____________ Phone ____________
email ____________________________

□ I want to double the value of my gift through my employer’s matching gift program. (Please enclose the matching gift forms.)

□ Please contact me about volunteer opportunities.
A Familiar Face in a New Role: Ivan Parr, Park Aide

By Linda Ciotti

A lot of you may know Ivan Parr as a very knowledgeable docent. You may have seen him out on the reef on weekends over the last couple of years, usually with camera and tripod in hand. As of August, you will see Ivan in a Park Aide uniform during his weekends at the reserve.

"Litter, hooligans, and commuting traffic aside, I don't think I could find a better niche."

Ivan moved from his native Hong Kong to California when he was three years old. That same year, his father brought him to Fitzgerald Marine Reserve when one of the 17-year cycle extreme low tides occurred. Even at three years old, Ivan was fascinated with all the animals and plants his father showed him. That trip was the beginning of Ivan's great interest in science, and particularly marine science.

When he was sixteen, his father encouraged him to find something useful to do with all of the photographs he had taken during his many visits to the reserve. A ranger at Asilomar suggested Ivan create a tri-fold identification card, and the laminated "Northern California Tidepools" guide sold at the Visitor Center was born. Before his seventeenth birthday, Ivan had come up with the photos he wanted to use and the text he wanted to include and started the creative process of layout and design. With his father's help with the actual printing, publication, distribution and sales, the tri-fold has been a success.

Ivan is currently a junior at St. Mary's College in Moraga and is majoring in "Environmental Sciences Study" which Ivan calls a "handcrafted" major because he wanted to study science but having to also pursue math and chemistry presented a few challenges to him!

Ivan is not sure what the future will hold for him. But his first choice would be some aspect involving marine science.

When asked what he likes most about being a Park Aide, Ivan said: "Litter, hooligans, and commuting traffic aside, I don't think I could find a better niche. I'm right next to the sea. I get to be around people I already know and like, in one of my favorite places in the world. And answering questions for two hundred people every weekend gives me a certain sense of fulfillment."

Ranger Durkin Wins Award

On October 23, at the Millenium Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles, our own Supervising Ranger Steve Durkin won a COLA (California on Location Awards) for his support in filming efforts of Memoirs of a Geisha. COLA salutes location managers and production companies and honors public employees who work to keep California film-friendly. "Steve did a fantastic job of keeping the Reserve safe during filming," said Friends President Mary DeLong. Steve enjoyed the awards ceremony, and after his many talks to groups at the Reserve was not intimidated by the crowd of 400. Congratulations, Steve!
President’s Perspective: Celebrating Our Volunteers

By Mary DeLong

We held our annual volunteer celebration on September 10th. Tom and Linda Ciotti were once again very gracious hosts providing both their home and all the food and drinks. There was a great turnout. We have a wonderful community of volunteers.

We are hoping to add to this community by training some more volunteers. As I have said many times, sharing the magic and the wonders of the tide pools is one of my great joys. It is a deep and rewarding experience and fun as well. I know I can affect the world with sparking a passion in just one child or adult. The volunteer naturalist training class will be starting again in January and if you or someone you know has an interest please get in touch with us for more information. See page 5 for a description of the class.

Our continuing education program for volunteer naturalists featured Mel Zucker in September and Tom Niesen in October.

Mel Zucker is a Geology professor at Skyline College and his lively lectures are always very popular with our docents. Mel gave us fascinating information about the geology of the reserve and talked about some special events that will be happening in the Bay Area next year to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the earthquake that struck San Francisco in 1906.

Tom Niesen is a Marine Biology professor at San Francisco State University as well as a member of the Friends board. He gave us great information about sea anemones, snails, limpets and nudibranchs and showed us a fraction of his wonderful collection of slides. Hopefully, we can persuade him to come back soon and teach us more about stars, urchins, crabs, barnacles etc.

I want to thank Bill Gomez and Maryann Danielson for their years of service as members of the board. They have both brought many excellent ideas and thoughtful comments to our board. Although Bill is stepping down as a board member, he will continue to be part of the Fitzgerald community as a volunteer naturalist. Maryann will be available to consult with the board on short-term projects. Jenna Kinghorn, the new editor of this newsletter, has become our newest board member.

We are trying to expand our membership. If you are currently a member of the Friends of Fitzgerald, thank you for your support. Be sure to tell your friends and family about the reserve and invite them to join, or give them the gift of membership for the holidays! If you are not a member yet, consider joining. New Friends are always welcome and appreciated.

Do Your Holiday Shopping at the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve!

If you are thinking about holiday gifts for family or friends, consider some of the items offered for sale in our Visitor Center. Some of the items you’ll find:

- Colorful t-shirts in a variety of sizes
- Books about the reserve and its inhabitants
- Laminated pocket guides for identifying birds and intertidal life

Or, for that hard-to-buy-for loved one, consider giving the gift of Friendship – a year of membership in the Friends of Fitzgerald Marine Life Refuge. Members receive this quarterly newsletter.

See the membership form on page 5 for more information.
Tidepool Tales

By Debbie Rogers

Friends of Fitzgerald Marine Life Refuge is a community of volunteers caring for and caring about the well-being of the precious Moss Beach tidepool area. Beach visitors and tides come and go, but since its founding in 1985, the Friends organization has proven to be central to the efforts to retain the diversity of sea life which makes the area so particularly enjoyable and valuable.

The goals of the Friends, as described by Virginia Welch who became its first president, were: “The protection and preservation of the Marine Reserve as a unique intertidal environment, and the promotion of educational activities for school children, residents, visitors and researchers, to see and touch many elements of a variety of wildlife ecosystems.” (The Natural History of the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, published by FFMLR 1999)

The objectives the Friends set for itself covered a wide range of plans, and from the original 9 members, the organization has grown to hundreds of people who support these goals. The Reserve has benefited greatly from this community effort.

The many programs established and sponsored by the Friends include the junior ranger program, the roving interpreter program, educational programs to promote public awareness, outreach programs that have included “docent-led tours, lectures and articles by scientists about marine life at the tidepools, orientation training for junior rangers, introduction of the first high school student docent intertidal training program, teachers’ workshops, beachwatch monitoring, visitation to schools by reserve staff personnel...” (as above), and the establishing of this quarterly newsletter, Between the Tides.

As with all groups of people working together toward certain goals, communication is an essential element for focusing the efforts, guiding the energies, and supporting the ideals that have been stated. Between the Tides is a vital part of this valuable communication and encourages the partnership that is necessary for this cooperative endeavor to preserve these wonderful tidepools.

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