

WIN A NEW
HYBRID!
Details Inside

Summer 2006

Teach Your Children - Ten Years of O'Neill Sea Odyssey

By Dan Haifley, Executive Director



Jack O'Neill and Stephanie Richardson, OSO's 25,000th student

For their extraordinary support for O'Neill Sea Odyssey (OSO), we have honored Robert Stephens and Julie Packard, California Assemblymember Fred Keeley, and his successor, California Assemblymember John Laird. The next special individual to be honored will be Jack O'Neill, on the occasion of 10th Anniversary of the program he started. The celebration will take place on October 6, 2006 at 5:30 PM at the Seymour Center at Long Marine Lab in Santa Cruz, details can be found inside this newsletter.

In the winter of 1996 Peggy Marketello brought her class out to sail on the Team O'Neill catamaran, with a bit of learning mixed in. "It seems like the right thing to do," Jack told a friend at the time. "I want kids to learn that the ocean is alive, and that we've got to protect it." School classes began taking advantage of free catamaran trips and the burgeoning education program that came with them in 1997. The O'Neill Sea Odyssey program was born.

The program quickly became popular because of the unique mix of fun and science learning that it offered. O'Neill, Incorporated bore all the costs of the program at its genesis. To be able to raise additional funds needed to sustain the program, a non-profit organization had to be formed in support of the program's educational purpose. Jack O'Neill and Carl Keehn organized a Board of Directors in 1997, and that group promptly got down to the business

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Here's To Another Ten Years

By **Bridget O'Neill and Jack O'Neill**

Chair and Founder and Co-Chair of the Board of Directors, O'Neill Sea Odyssey

If you take a moment to log on to www.oneillseaodyssey.org and look at our sponsors page, you will get a glimpse of the depth of support we have received over the past ten years. While the O'Neill family and business has contributed \$1.6 million in funds and in-kind donations, \$3.5 million has been raised from the community for the program and for the education center and building renovation. As to the number of kids served, we will pass the 35,000 mark this year. Last year, 63% of those kids were English learners, and a vast majority of the youth we have served would have never had the opportunity to do so without the generosity of so many donors.

The depth of our support is also reflected in the assistance we have had from volunteers who have done

The O'Neill family and business has contributed \$1.6 million in funds and in-kind donations, \$3.5 million has been raised from the community for the program

everything from moving our education center, to helping out in our recycled goods store, to producing a photo book that benefits the program, to soliciting support at service clubs and public events, and to folding and mailing fund appeals and newsletters.

We sincerely appreciate this support from so many. It demonstrates a deep commitment to our kids, our environment, and the future of both. At a time when the impacts of environmental abuse are becoming more visible, it is important to give kids the tools of science that can be used in the defense of our environment. It is one of the most important things that we can do. Let's keep the effort going. With your continued help, we can.

Cheryl Thompson Leaves Her Mark

By Dan Haifley, Executive Director

Thousands of Sea Odyssey kids saw her working as they peered through her window. She printed their photos. She computed the budgets for the donors who paid for their classes. She often handled the bus transportation from their schools and back. She made financial reports to the OSO Board of Directors and many donors.

Cheryl Thompson started working at O'Neill Sea Odyssey about the same time I did, and over the past seven years she has held many of the organization's parts together. The title "Operations Coordinator" was designed specifically for her. On June 1, Cheryl moved on professionally to join a local children's book publishing company. She made her mark as a professional, matter-of-fact leader, and will be missed by everyone at OSO.



Cheryl Thompson and Adam Steckley

Following in Cheryl's footsteps will be Adam Steckley, an OSO Instructor who brings a wealth of experience, knowledge and practical know-how from his family business and his time as a leader at the MSD Nature Center in Key Biscayne, Florida. We look forward to Adam's leadership and thank Cheryl for her service and dedication.

Webster Fund Dinner A Success

By Laura Barnes, Education Coordinator

The balmy June evening set the mood for the 5th annual Adam Webster Memorial Foundation fund raiser at the Santa Cruz Yacht Club. This year Tom and Judy Webster outdid themselves with an unforgettable evening filled with delicious food, cool jazz and dozens of tempting auction items. With the help of friends, family and a roomful of generous guests, Tom and Judy raised over \$7,000 to support the participation of special needs students in the O'Neill Sea Odyssey program. Thanks to the hard work of Tom and Judy, this was a sold out event!

The vision of the Adam Webster Fund is to provide a successful but not purely academic learning experience for individuals with special needs in the context of the ocean environment. The Adam Webster Memorial Fund hosts four classes each year and takes kids with special needs out on the O'Neill Catamaran. The fund is named for Adam Webster, the son of Tom and Judy Webster, who was severely physically challenged. Adam Webster died in 1999.

On June 17th the Hawaiian shirt clad volunteers gathered outside the Yacht Club in anticipation of the arrival of more than 60 guests. Judy and Chef Ron Sabbatis were in the kitchen preparing the seven-course

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Monterey Councilwoman's OSO Legacy

The Monterey Bay Sanctuary Foundation has provided a \$1,000 grant from the Ruth Vreeland Memorial Scholarship Fund to match a gift from the Harden Foundation based in Salinas, California. The grant supported Arthur Radford's class from Natividad School in Salinas, on 4/26/06. Ruth, who was first elected to the Monterey City Council in 1984, was a strong supporter of O'Neill Sea Odyssey and was instrumental in the designation of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. She had worked as a school teacher and was active in the Democratic Party. Up until her tragic death in a car accident in 2004, Ruth was a tireless campaigner for issues affecting the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary and the coastal and ocean environment.

OSO Executive Director Dan Haifley had known and worked with Vreeland since 1984, when they were elected Chair and Vice Chair, respectively, of the Democratic Committee for Monterey Bay. Their relationship continued through their successful efforts to fight offshore oil drilling and designate the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. At the time of Ruth's death, they both were serving on the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council. "Ruth devoted all her waking hours to the projects she was passionate about" said Haifley. "She brought incredible energy to everything she did. She loved putting the ocean and the kids together, and the gifts from her legacy fund reflect that. I want to thank the City of Monterey, the Vreeland Family and the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary staff and Foundation for keeping Ruth's incredible legacy alive."

Contributions in support of the Ruth Vreeland Memorial Ocean Education Scholarship Fund should be sent to the: Monterey Bay Sanctuary Foundation, 299 Foam Street, Monterey, CA 93940. For more information please call (831) 647-4209.

Community Foundation for Monterey County Provides Grant for Youth

The Fund for the Environment and the George P. Kendall Memorial Fund at the Community Foundation for Monterey County has provided a \$12,000 grant to O'Neill Sea Odyssey to provide its free marine science and ecology program to serve 180 Monterey County youth. As the steward of more than 250 funds and total assets of over \$100 million by the end of 2005, the Community Foundation is now the largest grantmaking foundation on the Central Coast. The Foundation's mission is to improve the quality of life in Monterey County by raising, managing, and distributing charitable funds to worthy organizations and by creating positive connections between donors and their interests.

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of filing papers to organize O'Neill Sea Odyssey as a non-profit corporation.

Board members Jack McLaughlin, Tim O'Neill and Theresa Coyle developed a mission statement, while Board member Nick Petredis worked on By-Laws and Board member Mike McCabe worked on the rigorous financial reporting required of non-profit organizations. Jack McLaughlin

worked to raise money, and applied his expertise to evaluating the program's performance. Theresa Coyle and Carl Keehn scheduled classes as Theresa worked with individual teachers to prepare them for their involvement. It was decided that although, the program would be offered for free, each class should perform a community service project to earn their trip aboard the Team O'Neill Catamaran.

In 1999, I was hired as Executive Director, and Cheryl Thompson was hired to organize program details. In 2000, I worked with the crew to expand the education program to include time in our new edu-

cation center in the old O'Neill Building. That same year the program narrowed the focus of our work to 4th through 6th grade youth, in order to make the program available to more kids. With new funding sources, the program was able to expand its capacity to a point where 150 classes a year were being served. We inaugurated our web site that year, and we developed an online system to accept applications from school classes and to track data from those classes that participated in our program.

Also in 1999 the untimely death of Adam Webster, a boy with special needs who had loved the time he'd spent on his parents' boat, spurred Tom and Judy Webster to start the Adam Webster Memorial Fund.

The Fund allows OSO to accommodate special needs youth, and operates to this day thanks to the hard work and vision of Tom and Judy, who were honored in 2005 as Community Heroes by the United Way of Santa Cruz County. Judy also persuaded her then-employer Applied Materials to underwrite a beautiful promotion video, Set Sail, which is still used today for presentations.

"The program quickly became popular because of the unique mix of fun and science learning that it offered."

The idea was simple: to provide quality, recycled goods for sale and to provide its profits to the OSO program. While a dedicated staff did a wonderful job at the former, rising costs prevented the store from raising funds for the program. After a five year run, the store was closed in February, 2005.

In 2000, Jack O'Neill and his longtime business partner Harry Hind donated the O'Neill Building to OSO. The original O'Neill building had been constructed in 1965 on property owned by the Santa Cruz Harbor, which had provided Jack and Harry a lease that would establish the O'Neill building as a revenue source for the Harbor. By constructing the building, Jack and Harry took a risk that helped establish the Harbor in its early, formative years.

By 2000, Jack and Harry had run out their successive leases from the Santa Cruz Port District (SCPD) and hoped that OSO could receive a new 25-year lease and renovate the building. OSO negotiated with the Port District staff to jointly renovate the building: OSO would pay 47% for the upstairs and the disabled-access elevator and the SCPD paid 53% for the downstairs.

Renovation of the O'Neill Building began in October 2003, utilizing over \$1.2 million in donations, including state bond funding obtained by then-State Assemblymember Fred Keeley. Volunteers from Starbucks, O'Neill Incorporated, and individuals from the Pleasure Point neighborhood near Santa Cruz pitched in to move OSO out of the building and into temporary quarters on the west side of the Harbor.

The temporary quarters consisted of a trailer established on the United States Coast Guard's basketball court on the west side of the Santa Cruz Harbor, near the Team O'Neill

To support OSO, a retail store called "O'Neill Sea Odyssey Collectables" was opened in 2000, it was later renamed Stylin Recyclin.



Crew 99' (From left) Keith Dahlin, Loren Fontinell, Jack O'Neill and Laura Barnes.

Save The Date

The 10th Anniversary of O'Neill Sea Odyssey will be celebrated on Friday, October 6 at 5:30 PM, at the Seymour Center at Long Marine Lab, Santa Cruz. The event will honor program founder Jack O'Neill, and will recognize supporters of our education center renovation. We will have both a live and a silent auction and will draw the winner of our Honda Civic Hybrid raffle. Event sponsors include Ocean Chevrolet-Honda - Platinum Sponsor, Cornish Carey Commercial - Gold Sponsor, and Silver Sponsors Devcon Construction Incorporated and Thoits, Love, Hershberger & McLean. Media Sponsors will include the Santa Cruz County Sentinel, and Good Times Santa Cruz. Reservations for the event will be \$75 per person, and will be available in mid-August at www.oneillseaodyssey.org.

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Tom & Judy Webster
United Way Silicon Valley

catamaran's home on "F" Dock. The trailer and an adjacent outdoor learning area were dubbed Camp Laird, in recognition of State Assemblymember John Laird's effort to obtain funding for the site. When the renovation was finished in August, 2004, Starbucks Make Your Mark volunteers helped us move out of Camp Laird, and into our new quarters. The newly renovated building was completed in August 2004.

In 2003 OSO had to find an innovative way to fund two new demands of our program: to serve English learners and to align with State and Federal Education standards. In 2003 OSO received a grant from the Toyota USA Foundation to translate our curriculum into Spanish, and align it with State and Federal academic standards. We worked with the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary to develop the "O'Neill Sea Odyssey: Investigations in a National Marine Sanctuary" handbook - <http://montereybay.noaa.gov/educate/curric.html> - and our agencies distributed the curriculum nationally, which is in use today.

In 2001, 2002, and 2003 the City of Oakland, State

Parks, and OSO utilized Sierra Club Youth In Wilderness grants to organize a two-day watershed to the sea program for low-income Oakland youth. In 2002/2003 the San Jose Community Oceanography Program involved 10 groups of 30 students each for a week long leadership program in watershed protection, enhancement, and ocean protection. In 2002 we upgraded our website to a full-fledged learning center to fully integrate OSO curriculum into each class school curriculum. In 2004/2005 67% of teachers that participated in the program used the curricula from our web site in their classrooms, up from only 28% of web site users in 2002.

In 2003 OSO worked with then-State Assemblymember - now State Senator - Joe Simitian and the Sierra Club to obtain approval of California Assembly Bill 1330 to study the impact of outdoor education. The resulting study found that children who attended outdoor education had science scores 27% higher than those who did not (http://www.yni.org/yi/standards_project/pdf/AB1330summary.pdf).

Reflections of the Santa Cruz Harbor: Portal to Monterey Bay, released in December 2005, is a beautiful photographic essay book about the purpose of the Santa Cruz Harbor, its economic impact, and its unique role in the region. Authors Gus

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The Adam Webster Memorial Fund: a special needs child experiences the ocean

Webster Fund Dinner continued on page 8

meal while Tom greeted the guests and directed them to their tables. Dinner was accompanied by the smooth tunes of JazzA, and by the end of the dinner people were dancing in the aisles. The Hawaiian themed menu, designed by Ron Sabbatis, was perfect for the warm summer climate and everyone enjoyed the spectacular dinner.

When dinner was over the silent auction went into full swing with items such as fishing trips on the

Monterey Bay aboard the Barefootin' II, Beach Boardwalk passes, Spa services at Lavish Salon among many other items. Among the most popular items were the birdhouse centerpieces, generously donated by Leslie Haws, that decorated each table. Each birdhouse inspired a bidding war that ended in generous contributions from each winner. Thanks to Tom and Judy Webster and all the donors and volunteers who made the night a smashing success.



Tom Webster runs the silent auction at the event.

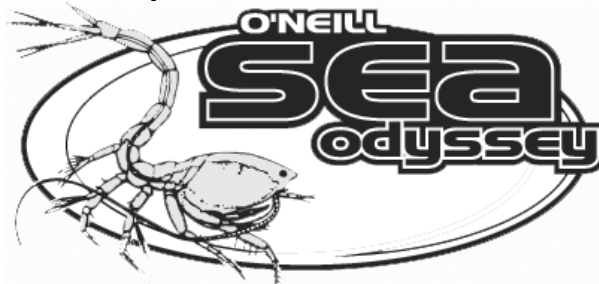
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All proceeds benefit



a free youth science program
www.oneillseaodyssey.org

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or e-mail dhaifley@oneillseaodyssey.org
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Summer 2006

Teach Your Children Well - Ten Years of O'Neill Sea Odyssey Cont. from page 2

Gregory and Dave Clark, were assisted by Ed Larson, Joyce Wrenn, Dan Haifley and Brian Foss. Thanks to fund raising done by Gus Gregory, all proceeds earned by its sale will benefit OSO. Books can be purchased at www.oneillseaodyssey.org.

In 2005, a tragedy provided a space for a family to create a loving legacy for the kids. Daniel Joseph Motta passed away in Davenport on July 29 at the age of 16. He was a student at Del Mar High School in San Jose. The Motta Family established a memorial fund in his name at O'Neill Sea Odyssey. The fund will support the annual participation of Castlemont Elementary School, which Daniel attended, in Campbell, California. Neal and Susan Motta have joined with their surviving children and many of Danny's friends to support our work.

In December 2004, the program received the California Governor's Environmental and Economic Leadership Award in Children's Environmental Education. In May 2005, US Senator Barbara Boxer awarded OSO with her statewide Environmental Champion award.

OSO received awards and recognition from federal and state elected officials, and local Mayors and City Councils. In 2003, OSO's Board of Directors established our Advisory Board to broaden our base of support.

The results of an independent survey analysis for O'Neill Sea Odyssey's 2004/2005 school year showed the highest overall score that our program has ever received. Teachers and educators who attended our program unanimously gave OSO 100% top ratings in the 'Overall learning experience' category, while the rest of the learning stations placed well above the 90th percentile for positive results.

During the 2004/2005 school year cycle 71.5% of the students served were ethnic minorities, and 63% were English learners. Since our founding, OSO has served over 33,000 kids and 1,100 classrooms, provided communities with 1,100 community service projects, raised over \$3.5 million for the program and education center renovation and provided youth with a life lesson in environmental stewardship.

It's been a great ten years. There's still a lot to do. With your help, we can do it.



Sophie Hesse, future environmental scientist and OSO alumnus

One Parent's Opinion

"I just wanted to let you folks know that my nine year old daughter came home last week, after a morning at sea with your crew and reiterated the curriculum in its entirety before proclaiming her aspiration to study environmental science. Thank you for providing this fabulous opportunity and capturing the imagination while instilling the essential values of stewardship through engaging hands-on study." - Andrea Hesse, 5/4/06