**Administrative Services**

This is the first issue of the Researcher Report. It is a monthly report of the activities at the University of Texas Marine Science Institute. Enjoy!

**Restoring the Pier**

This summer the instrument house will be renovated and new equipment has been ordered, including a weather station and ADCP current profiler. We are also partnering with the US Army Corps of Engineers and will utilize their dive training exercises to help repair the tide trap and datalogger tubes.

**Seminars**

Stay tuned for the Career Path Seminar Series, with Dr. Julien Lartigue from NOAA and Dr. Stacey Degrasse from FDA. You can schedule meetings with speakers through Jamey. Also, contact Jamey if you know someone interested in giving a career path seminar.

**New equipment**

Several new laboratory instruments have been purchased or are soon to be. The following equipment will be maintained by the faculty in parenthesis, but are available for use with scheduling and training.

- GC IsoLink for IRMS (McClelland Lab)
- GC-MS Pyrolysis Inlet System (Liu Lab)
- Confocal + FLD Stereoscope (Esbaugh Lab)
- UV/FLD In Vitro Plate Reader (Thomas Lab)
- Imaging FlowCam (Buskey Lab)
- Elemental Analyzer (Hardison Lab)

A new 42” display monitor with laptop and rolling cart has been purchased and is almost ready for use. See IT if you are interested in checking it out for teaching needs, meetings, or presentations.

The results are in and we have a new logo option. Thank you to everyone that completed the survey and submitted your thoughts. We are interested in receiving feedback on this logo - please email Sally Palmer with any comments.
RESTORE Act
UTMSI is working with the Harte Research Institute and other academic organizations on a consortium proposal for a RESTORE Act’s Center of Excellence, called Texas OneGulf. There was a meeting held in Houston last week to discuss acceptable governance structure, and administration and operating protocols.

Recap from hurricane meeting
Important to read the plan; we’re in an El Nino so fewer hurricanes predicted this year but stay on alert and be prepared. Steve Lanoux has been designated as a first responder for UTMSI to assess damage. Monitor the emergency 800 number and UTMSI website for updates about returning to work, stay in contact with your supervisor.

Where We’ve Been
Check out the conferences and meetings that our staff attended in May.
- 10th International Symposium on Reproductive Physiology of Fish in Olhao, Portugal – Peter Thomas
- International Association of Great Lakes Research Conference in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada – Mark McCarthy
- Joint Aquatic Sciences Meeting in Portland, Oregon – approximately 10 attended from UTMSI
- Food Protection Program Conference in Orlando, Florida– Robert Dickey

Faculty Facts

New Faces
Dr. Brad Erisman will be joining the faculty on August 18th. Brad received a BS in Aquatic Biology from the University of California, Santa Barbara; an MS in Marine Biology from California State University and his Ph.D. in Marine Biology from Scripps Institute of Oceanography, UCSD. His research interests are ecology, behavior, evolution, life history of fishes, mating systems, reproduction, and development of fishes, fisheries ecology and management, fish population dynamics and conservation biology. Brad will be joined by his wife, Kristin Evans, who recently landed a position with the Texas State Aquarium.

Awards
Dr. Andrew Esbaugh received the 2014 Ralph E. Powe Junior Faculty Enhancement Award.
Around Campus

Renovated Gift Shop
This in-house renovation project was done by UTMSI Technical Trades with assistance from IT. Make sure you look at the shelving and cabinets, all built by our expert staff. Don’t forget that UTMSI staff get a discount on merchandise!

Lyceum
Furniture for lounging, plenty of light from end to end, new computer stations for anyone to use, and soon to come carpeting to soften the noise level. It’s the result of a team effort—vision by the Director, demolition and construction by Technical Trades, dynamite cleaning by custodial, and interior design by decorator-in-chief Georgia with able assistance from Alamo Architects (who did the Estuarine Research Center interior).

Estuary Explorium
Opening late July, this educational space in the Visitor Center has multiple interactive display panels, children’s learning areas, wall graphics, floor tile that captures the flow of water through bays and estuaries, and even “clouds” created by suspended ceiling sections. The design and graphics were funded by a grant from NOAA and created by Wilderness Graphics, Inc., the ceiling and lighting was funded through UT Repair and Renovation money, and the rest was accomplished by Technical Trades with Building Maintenance funds.

Landscaping
The sprinkler systems have been rebuilt and programmed with new planters and borders around many portions of the campus. Don’t worry—the water used on the landscape is from our own wells and is non-potable, so we’re not pouring city water into the yard. Since some of it percolates back into the island water table, think of it as recycling with a purpose.

Coming soon...
...trails through the dune restoration project south of the Estuarine Research Center, Lab Building and Dorm D. The UT Graduate School of Architecture designed and built a teaching pavilion at the southwest corner of the elevated walkway between the Lab and Dorm D.

...broadband internet services to all MSI apartments. What may seem to be a simple matter of contracting for the service involves granting of legal easements on state property to a private corporation with accompanying survey of the property and a plethora of legal agreements, but it’s “in the works.”

External Affairs
The Marine Science Advisory Council meeting is coming up and will be August 8-9 with the Friday evening social being hosted at new member, Bobby Patton’s home and the Saturday meeting/lunch in the MSI Auditorium.
...those delaminating or rusting exterior doors are going to be replaced with storm-proof fiberglass reinforced plastic doors and stainless steel hardware. The purchase of the new doors is in progress, so you should start to see them going in over the next few months.

...a water-wise garden in the south end of the lawn area between the Lab and Dorm D that will extend under the elevated walkway and lead into the dune habitat center. It will contain specimen plants and be designed to attract butterflies and birds, and it will include a self-guided tour of xeriscape techniques and plants. We anticipate a team-based construction effort with our Grounds Crew leading the way, technical expertise and support from local Port Aransas Master Gardeners, and volunteer assistance through the Garden Club and Keep Port Aransas Beautiful.

**NERR and Education**  
[Missionaransas.org](http://missionaransas.org)

**Family Activities**
- Explore and learn this summer during our family-oriented Estuary Explorer Labs and Blue Science programs at the Bay Education Center in Rockport, TX.
- Don’t miss the family-oriented Early Explorer programs at the Estuary Explorium in Port Aransas, TX.

**Public Outreach**
World Oceans Day held on June 14th was a big success. Thank you to all the volunteers!

**Teacher Events**
The Reserve is hosting a free Teachers on the Estuary workshop for local 5th-8th grade public school teachers the second week of July.

**Summer Science Program**
This past June, the Summer Science Program was in full gear. This was an exciting inquiry-based learning experience for students entering grades 3-8th in the fall semester.

**ARK Happenings**
Whale skeleton excavation – stay tuned for more information on when the 50-foot fin whale buried in the dunes will be recovered!
Spotlight on Students

Undergraduate Classes
It’s summer time and that means that our undergraduates are here for summer courses. The Estuarine Ecology students are learning about general ecological principles of estuarine environments in Texas, including physiography, hydrography, and plant and animal community structure and productivity. Their recent adventures include field trips to the Nueces Delta marsh and seagrass beds of South Padre.

Research Experience for Undergraduates
The REU program is also in full swing. Check out their adventures and super cool blogs at http://reu.utmsi.utexas.edu/

Awards
- Congratulations to Kelly Darnell, who won the 1st place best poster and 3rd place best abstract at the Louisiana AFS meeting in May.
- Congratulations to Matt Khosh, who won the UT Graduate School Bruton Fellowship for 2014-2015.

Incoming Students
The following students have moved down to Port Aransas this summer, and will be here until they finish:
- Meredith Evans (in Dr. Liu’s lab)
- Carrie Harris & Christina Bonsell (in Dr. Dunton’s lab)
- Matt Seeley (in Dr. Walther’s lab)
- Matt Dzaugis (in Dr. Black’s lab)

August Graduations
This August, Kelly Darnell and Lisa Havel will graduate with doctorates and Erik Oberg will graduate with his master’s.

Community Events
Did you know that there is a summer softball league, which requires 5 women and 5 men each to play? If you are interested, you can indicate availability by clicking here.

Welcome & Celebrations

Appointments
- Dr. Bob Dickey is the co-chair of the Science Advisory Board working group of the NOAA RESTORE Act Science Program, and on the Sea Grant Advisory Board.
- Dr. Ed Buskey now serves on the NERR Association executive committee.
- Dr. Bryan Black will serve as Chair of the Workshop on Growth-increment Chronologies in Marine Fish: climate-ecosystem interactions in the North Atlantic

New Employees
Welcome! Ben Keller (Grounds), Denise Keller (Cook), Michael Samora (Mechanic/Technician), Dr. Margit Wilhelm (Bryan Black lab)

Awards
Congratulations to Venus Mills for receiving the UT staff excellence award!

Have a safe and happy fourth of July!

Did we miss something? Let us know any updates for August issue! E-mail Sally Palmer.