

May 2000 labelled  
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but should have  
been Issue 1

# NEERS NEWS



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## Things to remember

- Spring Meeting in Massachusetts.
- 2001 ERF meeting in Tampa, Florida
- New NEERS president
- More changes in the NEERS web page

### Fall 2000 Meeting of the New England Estuarine Research Society Block Island, RI November 2-4, 2000

Describing the fall meeting of NEERS is a complicated task. Our models of what goes on during these semiannual events are limited because our understanding of the processes is inadequate. The meetings could be getting better or worse, we really do not know. Perhaps if there were some more funds for this job . . .

In a similar vein, Scott Nixon in the opening session described our limited success in modeling shallow water estuaries; the theme was echoed in several other talks. Pigs in estuaries—inspired by hurricane events a year ago in Albermarle-Pamlico Sound—was another resonant thread.

About 150 NEERSians gathered on Block Island, RI under brilliant fall weather for the fall 2000 meeting of the New England Estuarine Research Society. This was the fifth in the B&B series of NEERS meetings (Berounsky & Berry, Veronica and Walter joined this time by Charley Ro-

man) and, by all indicators, another success. There were no reports of seasickness on the ferry ride over, despite the presence of some researchers who usually venture no deeper than the tops of their hipboots. The Spring House Hotel, situated at the top of a grassy knoll overlooking Rhode Island Sound, and tended by Manager David Houseman, was a great location.

The meeting began with a Special Symposium on *Estuaries: How Smoothly Will They Flow into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?* This was truly a test of our predictive power, as the real 21<sup>st</sup> century will begin at the end of December 2000. (As a point of fact, with accelerated sea level rise, the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be flowing into the estuaries, rather than the other way around. Several speakers pointed out that many salt marshes have been blocked by man-made structures at their upper ends and have nowhere to migrate to.) Michael Connor (public education and needs), Anne Giblin (getting our priorities straight), Jan Reitsma (what research is needed by environmental managers) and Peter Lord (perspectives of an environmental reporter) joined Scott in

laying out the issues we will face in the new century. There appeared to be some reasons to be hopeful. But, as the essayist James Branch Cabell (1879-1958) pointed out: "The optimist proclaims we live in the best of all possible worlds, and the pessimist fears this is true."

That evening, a small group gathered in one of the cottages for a lively discussion on *Nutrient Enrichment in Shallow Water Systems*. The next day, the group had a chance to hear papers, view posters, and discuss this further at the *Shallow Water Special Session*. The discussion from these sessions will be reported elsewhere.

There were 30 oral presentations and 22 posters on Friday and Saturday, the most ever at a NEERS meeting. The audience saw so many aerial views of Waquoit Bay that they thought they were being given a Rorschach ink blot test (to this viewer, Waquoit Bay looks like a sitting elephant with two wings sprouting from its back—not sure how that should be interpreted). Presenters came from as far as Ohio and Montreal. You can see the full program and

(Continued page three)

### *Spring Meeting to be held at Salem, Massachusetts, 31 May—2 June.*

Yes, Veronica, there is a Santa Claus, and yes, there will be a spring meeting of NEERS and no, you won't have to organize it. Alan Young and Robert Buchsbaum worked hard at finding a site both in-expensive and efficient for our next NEERS meeting. At this

point there have visited almost every motel/hotel complex from Boston to Gloucester, and finally came up with the Hawthorne Hotel in Salem. The hotel will be the site of the social and banquet. The meetings will be held at Salem College which is less than two miles

from the hotel. In any case mark your calendar for the 31st of May to the 2 June for the spring NEERS meeting. President Deegan, you had better work on your Power Point skills. Those undergrads and grads are out to best you.



## Message from your outgoing President

Block Island 2000 (as I'm sure it will come to be called) is shaping up to be (*yet another*) outstanding NEERS meeting. From the rate that rooms are being reserved it appears that this meeting may be the largest single assemblage of NEERSians on record. The host committee has done an outstanding job with the venue, logistics, and organizing Thursday's Symposium, ESTUARIES: HOW SMOOTHLY WILL THEY FLOW INTO THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY? The rest of the NEERS membership is doing its part as well, sharing ongoing scientific research by contributing a variety of interesting papers and posters. So if you want to catch some exciting science, well before it appears in ESTUARIES, as well as catch up on the other doings of friends and colleagues, but you haven't yet secured your room, best start on that task yesterday! And don't forget to register with the nifty on-line registration option available at our web site ([www.neers.org](http://www.neers.org)).

If you don't already have your copy of ESTUARIES and *Chesapeake Science* on CD-ROM, first check that your ERF membership is current, then order yourself a set today! Quoting from the ERF web site, "The CDs include all papers published in Estuaries from 1978 through December 1999, as well as all papers published in Chesapeake Science from 1960 through 1977. All papers are present in Adobe PDF format, a platform-independent document format readable with free Adobe Reader Software (software for some platforms is included on the Installation CD-ROM, all others are available via download free of charge). The articles are searchable by author, title, date, volume, or issue using a utility on the CD-ROM. All articles are word searchable using Adobe Reader." Price for members is \$50 and they can be ordered on-line at the ERF web site ([www.erf.org](http://www.erf.org)); Purchasing the CDs also gives you access to the set "on line", with a more powerful search engine than the CD set alone. I've been using the CDs together with "ESTUARIES-on-line" in my tidal marsh/estuarine ecology class and in my research this fall; the combination makes a very powerful tool for both teaching and research. Even though ERF does not give me a commission on sales, I recommend the CD set enthusiastically!

Some random thoughts from the outgoing president:

- Thanks and accolades to the NEERS Executive committee – and a particular vote of appreciation to Treasurer Pam Arnofsky and Secretary Pam Morgan. They do much more than most of us realize to assure that NEERS functions.
- Our web-masters Ron Rozsa and Larry Spencer have turned the NEERS web-site into the star among the ERF affiliates. Congratulations and thanks!
- Is the nitrogen driven decline of eel grass, documented so well by so many NEERS scientists at Waquoit Bay, now occurring in coves and embayments elsewhere in New England...? "data-free-analysis" on my part, but in eastern Long Island Sound, it sure appears that way. Comments welcome at Block Island!
- Marsh golden rod is in full flower, *Salicornia* is turning red and purple, grasses are brown, yellow and green all at once, groundsel bush adds big puffs of white behind *Iva* and panic grass, while red maples and gum trees color the upland edge; fall is a beautiful time for field work on estuaries and tidal wetlands (just be sure to choose your weather correctly).
- Non quantitative impressions: A decade ago NEERS meetings had *many* "nitrogen papers". For the last year or two *Phragmites* seems to have been the topic of choice. What will be the next decade's "hot topics" at NEERS meetings? Another question to discuss at Block Island.

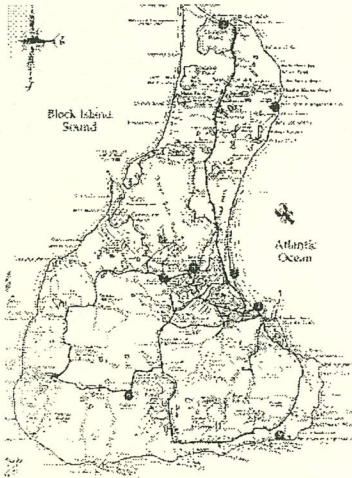
See you there!

## Message from the editor

When I published this newsletter last Summer, I promised a newsletter in the Fall. Well, Fall is technically still here, with winter coming up quick. I was going to get this out before the Block Island meetings, but after a chat with Vernicoia, we decided it would be better to do the newsletter later and report on the meetings. Thus, if you read Scott's column above you might wonder why he seems out of touch with the world. He isn't. Your newsletter editor is lazy and didn't change his text one iota. Perhaps in another life I will be more efficient.

I welcome to this edition, two new reporters, Stephen Hale of EPA and Pat Kremer of UCONN. Stephen gladly provided an overview of the Block Island Meetings and Pat an overview of electronic publishing. Thanks to both of them for making my job easier. Perhaps they will shame some of the rest of you into providing this lazy editor with some text material for the next edition of the NEERS News. Until then, have a pleasant holiday season and see you all someplace along the north shore of Massachusetts next spring.

Larry



**New President, new millenium, who know what will happen in the near future.**



## Taking Back the Publishing of Scientific Articles

Over the past several years we have seen the proliferation of "for profit" publishing of scientific journals. Along with this there has been increasing financial pressure on academic facilities (libraries) to keep up with cost of subscriptions for these journals. The cost escalation has been very stressful on the academic libraries and the result has been the cancellation of subscriptions, tightening of budgets for monographs, and deferred binding (exemplified by our own Avery Point Library).

The last few years have seen a drastic change in the options for how information is communicated. Many journals (including *L&O* and *Estuaries*) are available electronically as well as in hard copy. Many professional organizations are discussing how we might best take advantage of the technology to improve the way our scientific communications are published. As one can imagine, the for-profit publishers are not particularly interested in ways to improve efficiency and cut costs to institutional subscribers.

It is of interest to note that scientists are not powerless in this dynamic. It is not necessary simply to sit back and watch what unfolds over the next few years. Here are a few things that have been suggested:

1) Submit articles only to journals whose publishers are not interested simply in the profit-making commercialization side (e.g. journals published by scholarly societies)

2) Refuse to review manuscripts submitted to price-gouging publishers. They rely on our volunteer efforts for peer review for quality control, then turn around and make it expensive for us to have access to the papers we have reviewed.

3) Let your scientific societies know that this is a priority issue and they need to get together with the librarian community, and publishers to work out a solution that is in the best interest of the scientists.

4) Be aware of actually how much it cost for each issue of various journals. You'll probably be surprised at the price disparity.

For more information see:  
<http://www.arl.org/create/>  
<http://scilib.ucsd.edu/sio/guide/prices/>  
<http://www.gso.uri.edu/pell/hpa.html>

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### Mystery Portunid Crab Identified with NEERS Assistance

At the Spring meeting in Portland I posted some photographs of a portunid crab which I could not identify. The crab has a light orange carapace, heavy chelipeds with red tips, walking legs with orange bands, and bright red swimmerets. It apparently had been caught in traps by a commercial fishing boat in very deep water (2000-4000 feet) off Cape Cod, and had been brought to me by one of my students who works for a seafood company in Gloucester, Mass. Unfortunately, no NEERS members at the meeting could identify this crab.

A couple days after returning home from the meeting I received an email from Ken Keay of the MWRA who had seen my photos and had mentioned the crab to a colleague, Roy Kropp, who contacted Jeff Shields of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. He in turn contacted Paul Haefner at VIMS, who thought it might be a crab that was the subject of a Masters Thesis by Elizabeth Lewis at The College of William and Mary in Virginia. I sent the photos to Betty (now Elizabeth Wenner at the Marine Resources Research Institute in Charleston, South Carolina) and she identified the crab as the "bathyl swimming crab," *Bathynectes longispina*, previously known as *B. superbus*. She told me that it is often found in association with *Cancer borealis*, *Homarus americanus*, and *Chaceon* on the lower shelf-upper slope areas of the Chesapeake Bight at depths of 122-390 meters. It has been collected from waters off Martha's Vineyard south to the Florida Straits, as well as off Great Britain and Norway and in the Mediterranean and Black Seas.

Alan Young, Salem State College

## Block Island 2000—continued

abstracts at [www.neers.org](http://www.neers.org).

The 23 student presentations were particularly good, causing New President Linda Deegan to remark that she was glad she was not competing with these people for jobs. At the Friday evening banquet, President Deegan presented the following awards:

**Ketchum Prize** for best graduate student paper:

Jaime Vaudrey, (U Conn-Avery Point)

**Rankin Prize** for best undergraduate paper: Evelyn Hinckley, (Middlebury College)

**Dean Prize** for best student poster: Ruth Carmichael (BU-MBL)

The awards were \$100 plus a student membership in ERF plus a set of the new double CD "Estuaries and Chesapeake Science, 1960-1999."

Veronica Berounsky showed slides from past NEERS meetings, with a contest for who had changed the most (winner: Dave Burdick) and the least (winner: oddly enough, Veronica herself). Congenial Host Walter Berry then ran a game show called "Who Wants to Win an NSF Grant?" with Contestant Dave Burdick (he won).

Extracurricular Friday evening entertainment con-

sisted of (1) a musical jam session in the cottage, led by Chris Deacutis, and (2) dancing at the Yellow Kitten, where NEERSians outnumbered the locals.

Scott Comings of The Nature Conservancy led an interesting field trip on Saturday afternoon to Clay Head bluffs and Mosquito Beach. NEERSians who returned to the hotel after the field trip were disappointed that the horse-drawn carriage on the lawn of the Spring House Hotel was not there to carry them to the ferry; instead, it was for a wedding.

#### Other meeting highlights:

Elected at the NEERS business meeting:  
 President: Linda Deegan of The Ecosystems Center, Marine Biological Laboratory  
 President-Elect: Marshall Pregnall of the Biology Department at Vassar College  
 Treasurer: David Burdick of the Jackson Estuarine Lab at UNH

The smiling face of Joy Bartholomew, Executive Director of the Estuarine Research Federation, brightened the meeting. Four years ago, Joy swore that she would not miss the next NEERS meeting on Block Island. This time, she swore that she would not return to Washington with any of the five copies of *Estuaries* and *Chesapeake Science* CD-ROM's she had brought along. (Was the second vow met?)

M.J. James-Pirri kept the PowerPoint, slide, and overhead presentations flowing smoothly to the next talk, even during Friday's power brownout.

#### Student Travel Fund Winners:

Kathryn Ford (URI-GSO)

Vera Pospelova (McGill Univ.)

Julie Horowitz (Hampshire College)

Joanne Bintz (URI-GSO)

The ratio of fish eaters to meat eaters at the banquet was greater than 1.0, indicating that, despite the 1999 hurricanes, fish in estuaries still outnumber pigs and cows and chickens.

This meeting had the second-highest attendance (150); the highest was the fall 1996 meeting on Block Island (162). Through some fuzzy math on people who did not stay for the entire conference, Treasurer Pam Arnofsky calculated that the fall 2000 meeting was in fact the best attended ever. Clearly, this will not be the last great NEERS meeting on an island referred to by The Nature Conservancy as one of the "12 Last Great Places" in the Western Hemisphere.

Stephen Hale, EPA



## New England Estuarine Research Society

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WE'RE ON THE WEB AT  
[WWW.NEERS.ORG](http://WWW.NEERS.ORG)

Time and tide wait for no person

## ERF Biennial Meeting In Tampa DUES NOTICE

### 16th Biennial Conference of the Estuarine Research Federation ERF 2001



The 16th Biennial Internal Conference on estuarine research will be held in Tampa, Florida, 4 to 8 November, 2001. The meeting is entitled, "An Estuarine Odyssey". Thematic sessions will include:

- Detecting estuarine change
- Measuring estuarine health
- Temperate/tropical comparisons
- Marine restoration/conservation
- Essential fish habitat: new perspectives on habitat use and trophic interactions
- Combining science and management to solve estuarine problems
- Technological advances: applications to estuarine

science

- Modeling estuarine processes
- Ecological impacts of invasive species and disease

The Conference Chair is:

Mark Luther, College of Marine Science, University of South Florida,  
[luther@marine.usf.edu](mailto:luther@marine.usf.edu);  
727-553-1528

Go to the ERF homepage for more details on the meeting.

[Http://www.erf.org](http://www.erf.org)

David didn't ask me to do this, but I'm going to do it anyway. Are you up to date on your dues? If you think this society can keep going without your dues, then you probably think that George Bush and Al Gore are close friends. Smarten up. Both are politicians and both are looking for your votes as much as we're seeking your dues. If you have any questions, please, don't hesitate to send David an e-mail at [dburdick@cisunix.unh.edu](mailto:dburdick@cisunix.unh.edu) He'll give you the details as to how far behind you are. Bush and Gore, forget them. The Supremes in DC and Tallahassee have them under their thumbs!! Anyone got butterflies for sale?