Dear Friends of the New England Aquarium:

In 2005, change was all around us at the New England Aquarium. One of us, Bud, took the helm as the Aquarium’s new President and CEO in September, ready and eager to lead the Aquarium forward. We welcomed three new trustees and eleven new overseers to our two boards, adding a great deal of experience and passion for the Aquarium’s mission to present, promote and protect the world of water.

Down on Central Wharf, we introduced a terrific series of theme programs (Sharks: Tales and Truths and Turtle Trek) to give visitors a whole new way to experience our exhibits. We made significant progress in modernizing key structural components of the Aquarium, saw attendance increase three percent over 2004, and continued to strengthen our finances by finishing the year with an operating surplus. We also watched the Boston waterfront take on new life as the Rose Kennedy Greenway finally began to rise from the dust and clutter of the Big Dig.

Equally important, we extended the reach of our pioneering marine conservation programs, continued our longstanding efforts to protect the North Atlantic right whale, Kemp’s ridley seaturtle and other endangered species, and forged exciting partnerships with businesses to provide consumers with seafood harvested from well-managed stocks throughout the world.

All of these developments give us great confidence in the Aquarium’s future, and have helped lay the groundwork for a new five-year Action Plan that will be completed by the end of 2006. None of this could have been accomplished without the help of the Aquarium’s incredibly dedicated staff, ever-growing membership, generous support of many foundations, and loyalty of our wonderful contributors. For that we are most grateful!

Sincerely,

Bud Ris
President and CEO

R. William Burgess Jr.
Chair, Board of Trustees
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During the summer of 2005, the New England Aquarium launched a new and innovative programming approach, beginning with Sharks: Tales and Truths. By combining interactive activities, specially trained educators (the Shark Team), take-home materials (a Shark Passport), and an IMAX film (the wildly popular Sharks 3D), we drew attention to our collection of sharks and shark relatives that live throughout the Aquarium and presented it in a new way to engage people of all ages.

Sharks conveyed several themes: sharks are interesting; there are many different kinds of sharks; sharks are threatened by man and are not nearly as dangerous to man as people think; and there are things people can do to help protect sharks. Exit interviews show that the majority of visitors left with a basic understanding of these concepts.

Many staff members representing several departments planned and executed this program. From education to animal husbandry, conservation, marketing, communications and design, our Theme Team combined goals and strengths to create a successful program. The team took advantage of our existing collections and the expertise of Aquarium staff—and successfully attracted new visitors, increased our overall attendance and achieved our education goals, while saving the expense of bringing in a temporary exhibit or acquiring new animals.

In November 2005, we unveiled the second theme program: Turtle Trek. This program coincided with seaturtle stranding season, when endangered seaturtles recuperate in our medical center, which is visible to visitors. Turtle Trek combined strong conservation themes (all seaturtles are endangered), real-life activity in our medical center (including the viewing of baby turtles hatched here), several interactive components, a web-based activity that encouraged visitors to continue learning at home, and evening lectures by professionals working to protect turtles.

In April 2005, we held an official opening for the Curious George Discovery Corner on the first floor of the Aquarium, thanks to support from the Curious George Foundation. This bright space includes a carpeted stage and fun corner, crawl-through entry for kids, a 37-inch plasma screen for presentations, DVD/VCR player and a flex cam. Education staff designed new science and math activities for young visitors, and this space will be a focal point for family programs in the Aquarium main building.

The Aquarium is working toward many goals for 2006 and beyond. Raising approximately $5 million for a new sea lion exhibit is a high priority. The Aquarium’s four sea lions are being temporarily relocated while the design, fundraising and construction of the new exhibit takes place. The new design features more natural light, increased space, less noise, more opportunity for social interaction among the animals, and increased visitor interaction with the animals and trainers.
Several unique and important events led to a busy year for the animal health department (AHD) and the rescue and rehabilitation department at the Aquarium.

On October 31, the Aquarium rescued a 380-pound sub-adult leatherback seaturtle from a beach in Dennis, MA, after the turtle stranded there two days in a row. This was an historic event. Leatherbacks are the world’s largest turtle, with some adults weighing as much as a ton. They are critically endangered, and their primary habitat is the open ocean, so strandings of even dead leatherbacks are rare. Little is known or published about their health status. Almost all of the leatherbacks that have stranded on Cape Cod in the past 25 years were near death, usually from injuries due to boat strikes or entanglement in fishing gear.

The turtle was thin, lethargic and showed signs of distress. It was clear that the animal was critically ill, but not clear why. Once back at the Aquarium, staff worked around the clock to perform full diagnostics and treat the animal with antibiotics and fluids. Since the turtle was not accustomed to boundaries in its open-ocean habitat, Aquarium staff designed an in-water restraining vest to keep it from colliding with the tank walls and injuring itself. The invention of the harness will likely affect the future of leatherback rehabilitation.

Although the leatherback did not ultimately survive due to a severe fungal lung infection, the collaboration between the veterinarians and the rescue team contributed a great deal of new information to what we know about these rare creatures. We are extremely proud of our response and our contribution to the knowledge base about this rare animal.

One large step forward in our seaturtle program was our post-release monitoring of an endangered Kemp’s ridley and a threatened green seaturtle. We began satellite-tagging turtles upon their release into the ocean to provide insight on how the animals fare once they return to their natural environment. The project is currently providing information on survivorship, habitat use, migration routes and dive behavior.

We responded to a number of mass stranding events throughout 2005. Mass strandings of whales or dolphins are extraordinary, catastrophic events that present many challenges. In Cape Cod Bay, they often involve large numbers of animals coming ashore within a short period of time, sometimes over a large geographic area. The stranding event triggers a cascade of physiological changes in the animals, often culminating in a state of shock, which can become debilitating and life threatening. Thanks to funding from the Prescott Stranding Grant, we were able to perform the first satellite tagging of a beach-released, mass stranded dolphin that we are aware of. We have also successfully tracked two beach-released dolphins from separate mass stranding events and have funding to tag more animals.

Other notable events included the hatching of six yellow-spotted Amazon River turtles in the Aquarium’s Animal Medical Center and the successful rescue and rehabilitation of a severely ill and wounded female grey seal.
After the devastating Indian Ocean tsunami took more than 216,000 lives in December of 2004, it became clear that humans were not the only casualties from the storm. Many scientists began to ask: What other lasting, damaging effects did the tsunami have?

New England Aquarium scientist Gregory Stone led an expedition with the National Geographic Society to **survey Thailand’s coral reefs** and answer that question. Like rainforests on land, coral reefs are complex and species-rich environments, and are among the most diverse ecosystems. The results of the coral reef survey were both surprising and incredibly disappointing. While the team found not as much damage from the tsunami as perhaps they expected, the damage inflicted on our coral reefs—and the precious, diverse life within them—is constant, a product of human impacts, not of a single natural disaster.

An article summarizing the results of the expedition appeared in the December 2005 issue of *National Geographic*, and the Aquarium released a full report on our website. News outlets from around the world covered this story.

We also created a high-definition short film of the expedition to show before IMAX films in our Simons IMAX Theatre.

The Phoenix Islands—part of the country of Kiribati in the South Pacific—are eight small islands with pristine beauty, especially in its coral reefs. With funding from Conservation International's Global Conservation Fund, the Aquarium led a delegation to Kiribati in June and December of 2005 to collaborate with the government and establish one of the largest marine protected areas in the world to preserve the rare biodiversity of this area.

The Aquarium is working hard to keep seafood around in the future. Our ChoiceCatch™ program works directly with major seafood buyers to promote sustainable fisheries. Our work with Ahold USA, the parent company of Stop and Shop, guides this large food distributor to source seafood that favors marine conservation. Our Celebrate Seafood initiative also highlights environmentally responsible seafood choices for our visitors through information on our website and through a Fish of the Month special entree in our Harbor View Café each week.

Our award-winning **World of Water film series** released *Paradise Found: The Phoenix Islands*, about the Aquarium’s project in Kiribati to conserve coral reefs. WOW films are seen by tens of millions of viewers around the world each year. We are producing high-definition TV (HDTV) short films for viewing in our IMAX Theatre. Sappi Fine Paper North America, the Aquarium’s first Corporate Conservation Partner, provided support for a video short on South African penguins in the wild and our own penguin conservation projects. In the Aquarium’s main building, we began projecting large HD images of turtles in the wild onto our new Ocean Wall. We believe this will better inform visitors about our global conservation activities and create a vivid sense of discovery.

The **Marine Conservation Action Fund** (MCAF) recently provided funding to help monitor and protect the endangered whale shark in Western Australia and to study the effects of mercury on seaturtles.

We released a report on the first ever health assessment and satellite tagging of **Hector's dolphin** in New Zealand, one of the most endangered dolphin species in the world.
Our newest research program includes building innovative ropes and fishing gear that will reduce marine bycatch—marine creatures that are unintentionally caught while fishing for another species. One of these ropes is specially designed to lie on the ocean floor without abrasion, one glows in the dark (so whales can avoid it), and one is weak enough that most large marine animals can break free if they get entangled. Several Maine lobstermen are testing this gear to help us evaluate how it works.

We completed our study of the physiological responses and the survival of sub legal-sized spiny dogfish after they are accidentally caught by commercial trawl gear. Preliminary results indicate that dogfish thrown back after moderately sized catches exhibit good survival rates.

We continued studying fish behavioral diversity, honing in on how social organization is controlled by small molecules found in the brains of African cichlid fishes.

Using behavioral techniques, we began exploring fish eye movement to determine what features of a net are aversive to cod. The goal is to reduce bycatch by redesigning nets to enable juvenile fishes to escape at the beginning of the trawl, where chances of survival are greater.

As the levels of harvested wild fish reach peak levels, we aim to minimize the negative impacts and maximize the benefits of aquaculture (cultivating fish under controlled conditions), including ways to minimize salmon escapement, uncover methods for crustacean population enhancement and develop products high in omega-3 fatty acids. Our laboratory studies of the American lobster explore how shell growth and nutrition impact the onset of shell disease. We also study the rural economies relevant to the wild harvest of Brazilian ornamental fish and how this trade can be modeled to create a certification program for all South American fisheries.

Aquarium scientists led a large group of authors on a paper published in *Science* in July, entitled “Right Whales in Crisis,” calling attention to the continuing negative human impacts on this critically endangered population. Field studies of right whales continued throughout the year, with record-breaking sightings of courtship groups, a large number of calves, and a highly successful series of inshore and offshore surveys.

We conducted health assessments on 22 live harp and hooded seals as part of a study on why these seals are so far south. The study included sampling several other animals that were collected for rehabilitation, and conducting necropsies (animal autopsies) on many deceased animals.

With collaborators from the University of Southern Maine, we conducted surveys to begin a census of marine life on Platts Bank in July of 2005 with the Aquarium’s new research vessel Galatea. This program will evaluate the roles that large vertebrates play in the Gulf of Maine ecosystem.

We continue to use GIS (Geographical Information System) to map locations of sea turtles, track right whale locations and analyze right whale movements from sightings and survey information. We collaborate with the University of New England to look at the patterns in right whale sightings over the past 24 years.
Outreach and Youth Programs, funded through grants and other generous gifts, served more than 10,000 during 2005. A group of specially trained youth staff members provide great programs and serve as positive role models for young students in Boston neighborhoods. Youth Programs continued to give Boston and Cambridge teenagers the opportunity to have paid summer jobs at the Aquarium while developing career skills and environmental leadership skills.

Our Free to Learn program provided approximately 14,000 free admissions for Massachusetts student groups in 2005. A new application system allowed us to prioritize by financial need.

The Harbor Discoveries summer camp program had a great summer in 2005. With generous sponsor support, campers explored freshwater and marine environments from north of Boston to Cape Cod to Rhode Island and Connecticut.

The Lowell Institute offers support for our Women in Science program that gives middle and high school girls a chance to meet women who use science in their professional work. This year, we held separate middle and high school sessions, which helped focus the sessions and allowed participants to interact with presenters in a more personal manner.

The Aquarium’s Teacher Resource Center (TRC) served more than 3,000 teachers through workshops and consultations in 2005. Hundreds of items from the TRC were loaned out for classroom use.

Lowell Institute support allowed us to continue our evening education programs, including free lectures and film screenings. In the spring, we focused on connections between human health and ocean species.

The National Science Foundation-funded Center for Ocean Sciences Education Excellence (COSEE-NE), in partnership with the University of Massachusetts, the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and others, launched a renovated website at www.cosee-ne.net. We also sponsored new Ocean Science Education Institutes (OSEI) that aim to infuse ocean science research into middle school classrooms by fostering interactions between educators and researchers. COSEE-NE also facilitated a meeting in December to create a new collaborative network intended to foster ocean science literacy in New England.

In 2005, the education department expanded our Family Explorers Program to welcome children as young as seven months old, with a parent. Our other Family Explorer Programs continued to teach and engage children ages 18 months to 5 years with topics such as animals of the open ocean and ocean opposites. These programs are designed to join children and parents together in learning.

Our School Outreach Programs served more than 25,000 students in 2005. Our Tidepool and Whale Day programs continued to be the most popular programs from more than a dozen different offerings for school groups, covering topics from penguins to sharks to water properties. The Overnight Program continued to attract children to the Aquarium for evenings of fun learning. In September, we announced that participants are now able to sleep among the Amazing Jellies in the West Wing of the Aquarium.

We strive to provide access to the Aquarium’s educational resources for people who might otherwise be unable to afford our programs. Our Community
Volunteers are a major part of our organization here at the New England Aquarium. By sharing their time, knowledge and love for the world of water, they make it possible for the Aquarium to be the vital and exciting institution it is.

Our volunteer corps consists of individuals of diverse backgrounds and ages. They all have different reasons for donating their time, and they all get something different from the experience.

Jeremiah Seymour, a 27-year-old intern and volunteer in husbandry, credits his time here with prompting him to go back to school for biology and psychology at UMass Boston. “I've definitely made professional connections with the staff in fishes and research,” he says. “The staff is really encouraging and helpful.”

Nineteen-year-old Gerson Louis has been volunteering here since 2003. Recently, he became the first teen intern ever to dive in the Giant Ocean Tank.

Elise Blanken, a 30-year-old volunteer Rescue and Rehabilitation Associate, says she would definitely recommend volunteering at the Aquarium to others. “It is very rewarding,” she says. “Everyone I volunteer with looks forward to coming in. Having volunteered other places, the Aquarium has an exceptional program setup. Volunteers can contribute a lot and can assist in direct care of animals. You are expected to give a lot. But you also get a lot back in return.”

This past year, our 879 volunteers contributed 81,102 hours of their time to the Aquarium. That’s the equivalent of 42 additional full-time staff members. According to the 2005 Annual President’s Economic Report, the value of the average volunteer hour is $17.55, meaning that the efforts of Aquarium volunteers were worth more than $1.4 million.

The New England Aquarium is grateful to our volunteers, and we know that they will continue to make this a wonderful place to visit for years to come.
Year-End Financial Summary

New England Aquarium’s overall financial position continued to improve in 2005 due to successful initiatives designed to increase admissions and retail sales as well as ongoing efforts to reduce and control operating expenses. The year was also characterized by support for and completion of several important capital projects as the institution modernized its facilities.

New England Aquarium’s attendance totaled 1.33 million in 2005—3% more than 2004 and the best year since 2002. Attendance over the last six months of 2005 was outstanding, increasing 14% over the same period in 2004. Main building visitation, including individuals, school groups and members, totaled 1.13 million in 2005—up 5% from 2004.

The Simons IMAX Theatre had its best year since its opening in 2002. Ticket sales grew 16% to 448,000 due to successful marketing efforts, the popularity of several new IMAX 3D films and increased combination ticket sales. New England Aquarium’s Simons IMAX Theatre was by far the top grossing and most attended large-format theatre in the Greater Boston area.

Operating revenue and support of $33.1 million in 2005 was slightly below 2004—although gains were achieved in many important categories. Demonstrating management’s successful cost control efforts, overall operating expenses increased only 2% in 2005 despite substantial increases in energy costs, exhibit repairs and interest expense as well as planned increases in labor costs. Salaries and wages increased 6% in 2005 due to selective staff additions and ongoing efforts to bring employee compensation into better alignment with the market.

Cash flow in 2005 was more than sufficient to fund all operations, further reduce debt, fulfill all vendor obligations and finance important capital expenditures. An operating surplus of over $600,000 was generated in 2005, although net assets declined due in part to asset write-downs taken to strengthen our future financial position. Also, more than $4 million of critical capital projects were completed over the last two years, including an upgrade to the Aquarium’s electrical system, new life support and chilled water systems and other infrastructure replacements.

As expected, our balance sheet continues to get stronger—reflecting the substantial gains in operating and financial performance achieved over the last several years. New England Aquarium’s total liabilities were at $32.6 million at year-end 2005 compared to $41.8 million at year-end 2002. The ratio of net assets (equity) to total liabilities improved again to 108% in 2005 compared to 79% in 2002.

We have worked very hard over the past few years to stabilize and improve New England Aquarium’s financial position and to upgrade our exhibits and facilities. Our results speak for themselves. Advancing our mission, continuing to reduce debt, building endowment and upgrading our infrastructure continue to be the focus of our attention. We have spent considerable time preparing and implementing a thoughtful and comprehensive operating plan for 2006—one that projects attractive outcomes. We look forward to reporting our continued progress.

Walter J. Flaherty
Executive Vice President
Chief Operating Officer & Treasurer
New England Aquarium Corporation
Financial Results (in thousands of dollars)

Operating Revenue & Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY 2005</th>
<th>FY 2004</th>
<th>CHANGE $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Admissions – Individuals &amp; Groups</td>
<td>$12,820.5</td>
<td>$12,548.9</td>
<td>$271.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Sales – Food, Gift Shop &amp; Events</td>
<td>9,387.3</td>
<td>9,263.8</td>
<td>123.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Memberships – Individual &amp; Corporate</td>
<td>2,211.5</td>
<td>2,077.5</td>
<td>134.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gifts &amp; Pledges</td>
<td>1,744.5</td>
<td>3,041.7</td>
<td>(1,297.2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants &amp; Contracts</td>
<td>5,505.7</td>
<td>5,164.9</td>
<td>340.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1,418.6</td>
<td>1,146.9</td>
<td>271.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Operating Revenue &amp; Support</td>
<td>$33,088.1</td>
<td>$33,243.7</td>
<td>($155.6)</td>
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Operating Costs & Expenses

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>FY 2005</th>
<th>FY 2004</th>
<th>CHANGE $</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research, Conservation &amp; Education</td>
<td>$4,882.4</td>
<td>$4,684.2</td>
<td>$198.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exhibit Development &amp; Maintenance</td>
<td>5,495.2</td>
<td>4,209.8</td>
<td>1,285.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plant Operations</td>
<td>5,155.5</td>
<td>5,090.2</td>
<td>65.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cost of Retail Sales</td>
<td>7,862.1</td>
<td>8,079.9</td>
<td>(217.8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Administration &amp; Supporting Services</td>
<td>6,966.9</td>
<td>7,963.7</td>
<td>(996.8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>982.1</td>
<td>860.1</td>
<td>122.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>1,119.9</td>
<td>792.7</td>
<td>327.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Operating Costs &amp; Expenses</td>
<td>$32,464.1</td>
<td>$31,680.6</td>
<td>$783.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operating Surplus*</td>
<td>$624.0</td>
<td>$1,563.1</td>
<td>($939.1)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

* Operating surplus, as defined by management, excludes depreciation and amortization charges and non-recurring transactions. Audited financial statements, with an unqualified opinion by Tofias, PC, are available on request.

Total Aquarium Attendance (millions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>1.33</td>
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IMAX Theatre Attendance (thousands)

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>2002</th>
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<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>539.0</td>
<td>442.0</td>
<td>386.0</td>
<td>448.0</td>
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### Changes in Net Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY 2005</th>
<th>FY 2004</th>
<th>CHANGE $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operating Surplus</td>
<td>$624.1</td>
<td>$1,563.1</td>
<td>($939.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding for Capital Improvements</td>
<td>1,074.8</td>
<td>3,359.1</td>
<td>(2,284.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realized &amp; Unrealized Gains, Net</td>
<td>168.3</td>
<td>211.4</td>
<td>(43.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gain on Sale of Assets</td>
<td>243.2</td>
<td>960.4</td>
<td>(717.2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depreciation &amp; Amortization Expense</td>
<td>(2,724.4)</td>
<td>(2,516.7)</td>
<td>(207.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write-off of Existing Fixed Assets</td>
<td>(1,268.8)</td>
<td>(246.9)</td>
<td>(1,021.9)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Additional Minimum Pension Liability</td>
<td>(129.2)</td>
<td>175.5</td>
<td>(304.7)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase (decrease) in unrestricted net assets</td>
<td>($2,012.1)</td>
<td>$3,505.9</td>
<td>($5,518.0)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase (decrease) in restricted net assets</td>
<td>$619.3</td>
<td>($1,483.0)</td>
<td>$2,102.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase (decrease) in net assets</td>
<td>($1,392.8)</td>
<td>$2,022.9</td>
<td>($3,415.7)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net Assets - beginning of year</td>
<td>$36,445.3</td>
<td>$34,422.4</td>
<td>$2,022.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Assets - end of year</td>
<td>$35,052.5</td>
<td>$36,445.3</td>
<td>($1,392.8)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Net Assets/Total Liabilities

<table>
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<th></th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Net Assets</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>104%</td>
<td>108%</td>
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### Total Liabilities (millions)

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liabilities</td>
<td>$41.8</td>
<td>$37.4</td>
<td>$35.0</td>
<td>$32.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The financial support of our many members and friends helps the New England Aquarium maintain its high-quality living exhibits, public programs, research projects and conservation efforts. This generosity allows the Aquarium to continue leading global and regional efforts to protect aquatic habitats and promote stewardship of the world’s oceans.

**Gifts from Individuals**

More than 250 generous individuals contributed through the Aquarium’s Patron Programs, including the President’s Circle, Navigator Society and Conservation Society. Together, these programs raised $1.24 million in unrestricted gifts. The number of donors giving through the President’s Circle increased in 2005. During the fall, donors in this leadership category were honored at a dinner party, where they were introduced to new President and CEO Bud Ris. The Navigator Society, which added more than 30 new members, enjoyed a special dinner with Aquarium leadership and staff members in May.

With support from long-time members and new friends, the Membership Program reached $1.75 million in 2005. A new member services desk was installed in the Aquarium’s lobby to serve our 20,000 member households and invite new members to join.

**Gala**

On September 16, 2005, the New England Aquarium hosted its annual gala fundraiser, Go Fish! More than 300 guests enjoyed a late summer evening. At the gala, President Ris had the honor of presenting the 2005 David B. Stone Awards to David Rockefeller Jr. and Peter Benchley for their service to the environment and community. The gala raised more than $275,000 through ticket sales, donations, corporate sponsorship and a raffle and live auction.

**The Edmund C. Toomey Endowed Education Fund**

A fund was established in early 2005 to honor outgoing President Edmund Toomey. Sixty-five thousand dollars was raised to launch the new fund, which is expected to grow in the coming years. Earnings from this endowment will support the Aquarium’s efforts to provide meaningful and engaging programs for people of all ages to learn about the world of water.

**Corporate Partner Program**

**Corporate Sponsors**

Corporate Sponsors contributed $425,000 toward exhibits, programs and events. Sponsorships enable corporations to enjoy the benefits of membership along with corporate visibility, media packages and special events. In 2005, corporate sponsors supported a wide variety of programs including penguin conservation, the Amazing Jellies exhibit, Harbor Discoveries Camp, Beach Teach, the Edge of the Sea exhibit and the Go Fish! gala.

The Aquarium welcomed its first Corporate Conservation Partner, Sappi Fine Paper North America. This exciting new program allows an organization to join the Aquarium in funding important research, conservation or exhibition work. Sappi is working with the Aquarium to help promote an understanding of the threats and challenges to the African penguin.
**Corporate Membership**
Through Corporate Membership, organizations support the Aquarium’s mission while enjoying free admission for their employees and a variety of other benefits. The program has 176 members, contributing $516,715—making 2005 the strongest year ever.

**Foundation and Government Support**
Grants from foundations and government agencies provided vital support to the Aquarium’s overall operations. Unrestricted grants exceeded $700,000. Program grants supporting specific, mission-driven activities amounted to more than $3.5 million. The David and Lucille Packard Foundation supported the Aquarium’s efforts to conserve global fisheries with a grant of $185,000 to the Sustainable Fisheries Initiative. NOAA’s John H. Prescott Program provided support for the Aquarium’s marine mammal rescue and rehabilitation efforts through a grant of $100,000. The Starr Foundation’s $50,000 grant helped the Teacher Resource Center provide materials, activities and ideas to more than 3,000 educators interested in bringing the world of water into their curricula.

Several major capital projects were completed in 2005, including renovations to the Gulf of Maine and Edge of the Sea exhibits, restoration work on the building’s exterior, replacement of water piping that supplies our exhibits, and repair to the public walkway lining Central Wharf. These and other projects were made possible by generous capital grants totaling $1.1 million.
A Suburban Seal and a Humpback in the Harbor

Aquarium staff acted as scientific ambassadors for a number of newsworthy events in 2005, by both explaining incidents to the media and responding directly to crises. Two particular events centered on animals that appeared in unusual places: the humpback whale in Boston Harbor and “Squirt,” the suburban seal.

Squirt burst onto the scene in March, when a family in Middleboro, MA, found him asleep on their lawn, more than 30 miles from the coast. The young harp seal had apparently swum up the Taunton River and its flooded tributaries, following the annual herring migration, and crawled onto the grass to rest. Harp seals are native to Canada, but juveniles sometimes show up in New England waters.

Aquarium seal biologist Belinda Rubinstein examined Squirt and discovered he was sick, underweight and missing patches of fur. He was sent to the University of New England’s Marine Animal Rehabilitation Center to recuperate. On June 23, a heavier, healthy Squirt was released into the Atlantic Ocean from a beach in Biddeford, ME.

Interestingly, herring are also suspected of tempting a larger visitor to the Boston area—the humpback whale spotted in the Harbor in late April. The humpback was initially spotted on April 19, and consistent sightings continued through April 22. The Aquarium, along with the Whale Center of New England, chose not to publicize the information until later because of the added risk of ship strikes by curiosity seekers. Sightings of a small whale moving out of the Harbor on April 26 and May 5 convinced all parties that the animal had safely departed—having apparently gotten its fill of the smelt and herring in the Harbor.
Our new president’s love for the ocean also extends well beyond his professional interests—he is an avid sailor who has spent many hours racing in Boston Harbor off the Aquarium’s pier.

The Aquarium’s New President

Bud Ris became President and Chief Executive Officer of the New England Aquarium in 2005 following a unanimous vote by the Board of Trustees. Ris, the former head of the conservation-minded Union of Concerned Scientists, is a longtime Boston-area resident and an internationally known figure in both the scientific and environmental fields.

R. William Burgess Jr., Chair of the Board of Trustees, cited Ris’ combination of proven leadership ability and high professional regard in his comments on the board’s decision. “Bud’s excellent background on environmental issues and his extensive network throughout the scientific community will help the Aquarium in its core mission of protecting and presenting the world of water,” Burgess said. “Bud has been at the forefront of debate on key issues such as climate change, and first began his career working on marine conservation and coastal zone management.”

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Aquarium Honors David B. Stone Award Winners

At the Go Fish! Gala fundraiser, Bud Ris presented the 2005 David B. Stone Award to David Rockefeller Jr. and Peter Benchley. The David B. Stone award recognizes distinguished service in the environment and the community. Rockefeller and Benchley received the awards in recognition of their unflagging commitment to protecting the world of water.

Benchley, who passed away in early 2006, was a noted writer, filmmaker and media personality who for decades turned his plentiful talents to the worthy cause of oceanic conservation. An accomplished scuba diver, he first developed a passion for the ocean as a child in the waters off Nantucket.

As the author of the novel Jaws, Benchley was known especially as “the voice of sharks.” He was a longtime friend of the New England Aquarium, and executive produced and narrated seven films in our award-winning World of Water short film series. Benchley’s most recent work of non-fiction, Shark Trouble, was published in 2002 and chronicles his many years of experience studying, diving with and teaching the world about sharks.

Rockefeller’s work as a philanthropist and conservationist has been extensive, and includes serving as a member of the Pew Oceans Commission and as vice chair of both the National Park Foundation and the Alaska Conservation Foundation. An avid sailor, in 2004 Rockefeller co-founded Sailors for the Sea, an organization dedicated to involving past, present and future recreational sailors in the fight for ocean conservation. As trustee of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Rockefeller has also helped channel contributions to dozens of deserving organizations, including the National Environmental Trust, the Ocean Conservancy, the American Oceans Campaign, Greenpeace, the Sierra Club and SeaWeb.
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We would like to thank our corporate sponsors and donors who so generously supported the Aquarium in 2005.

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Near-Record Year for Right Whale Births
The 2005 right whale calving season was the second best in recorded history, with 28 calves born in the months spanning late 2004 and early 2005. However, four right whales were found dead in 2005, and Aquarium right whale researchers caution against a false sense of security.

Since 2001, there have been 116 recorded right whale births and 22 recorded deaths. Population models—cited in a recent Science article authored by Aquarium researchers—indicate that only 17 percent of right whale deaths are detected each year, leaving 83 percent undiscovered. That means as many as 129 right whales may have died since January of 2001, only 22 of which have been detected. With 116 births over the same time period, the North Atlantic right whale population may have declined by 13 individuals since 2001.

Historically, more than half of all known right whale deaths have been attributed to human activities. At least three of the four known right whale deaths in 2005 were caused by human actions—two due to collisions with ships, and one by a fishing gear entanglement. If something isn’t done soon, the North Atlantic right whale could quickly become extinct.
Simons IMAX Theatre Enjoys Banner Year

The year 2005 was an incredibly successful one for the Aquarium’s Simons IMAX Theatre, which is now the busiest IMAX theatre in New England. More than 460,000 people saw an IMAX film in our Trust Family Auditorium in 2005. *Sharks 3D* proved to be a huge hit with audiences, accounting for almost 210,000 of those visits.

Much of this success is due to the effective integration of the theatre into Aquarium-wide theme programming. *Sharks 3D* was a perfect complement to the *Sharks: Tales and Truths* program, and Aquarium and IMAX staff did a great job presenting the film and the program as a package. The result was a 30% rise in the sales of Aquarium/IMAX combination tickets in 2005 and two straight months of record theatre attendance in July and August—more than 65,000 visitors saw IMAX films here in those months. Visitors are realizing that a trip to the Aquarium isn’t complete without seeing an IMAX film.

This programming integration trend continues with the debut of *Deep Sea 3D* in March of 2006 and the April launch of the Aquarium’s new theme program, *Stars of the Sea*. Evening film times also work to promote the Simons IMAX Theatre as a waterfront destination in its own right.
Aquarium Featured in PBS Documentary

In December of 2005, New England Aquarium was one of four leading aquariums featured in an hourlong national PBS special entitled _Window to the Sea_. The program explored the role of aquariums in today’s society as well as the changing ways that aquariums have displayed ocean life over the years.

In interviews with founder David B. Stone and Vice President of Global Marine Programs Greg Stone, the New England Aquarium was credited with radically redefining aquarium exhibit format, architecture and missions. Peter Chermayeff’s innovative building design and the importance of the Aquarium in revitalizing Boston’s waterfront received special emphasis. The Aquarium’s leading role in aquatic medicine was highlighted through segments on the Aquarium Medical Center and our work rescuing and rehabilitating sea turtles.

Also featured in _Window to the Sea_ were the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago, the Monterey Bay Aquarium in Monterey and the Waikiki Aquarium in Honolulu.

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Grants from the following foundations supported programs and operations during 2005.

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- Four Seasons Hotel, Boston
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Aquarium President Edmund Toomey Returns to Academia

Aquarium President and CEO Edmund C. Toomey announced his resignation in July of 2004, having successfully guided the institution through a serious financial crisis. Upon his departure in early 2005, Toomey was named President Emeritus, and he remains on the Board of Trustees.

Toomey, who has returned to his native academia as the COO of Lesley University, had always insisted that he would only stay until the Aquarium was restored to operating stability and firmer fiscal footing. He achieved this goal. Under Toomey’s leadership, the Aquarium experienced two consecutive years of operating budget surpluses, increased development targets, and began aggressively addressing deficiencies in the physical structure of the more than 35-year-old main building. Equally important, the Aquarium maintained its core mission programs in conservation, research and education. The New England Aquarium community will miss his capable and compassionate leadership.

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Articles, Reports, etc.


