It’s time to live blue™

The Blue Park in Our Backyard
You’ll Flip for Our Fur Seals
Marketing Director’s Passion for Aquarium is Contagious

Members’ Magazine
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From the Chair of the Board of Trustees

While it’s impossible to choose one animal from among the thousands as a favorite, I—like many Aquarium visitors—love watching the acrobatic antics of the northern fur seals in the New Balance Foundation Marine Mammal Center.

It’s not simply their athleticism, luxurious fur (the second thickest coat among animals), or adorable rass (they are a member of the eared seal family known as Otariids), but it’s how they use their scientific research to be effective.

Donna K. Hazard

Retread Celebrates 30 Years

While Myrtle the green sea turtle is the indisputable queen of the Giant Ocean Tank, Retread, the loggerhead is the princess. But when you’re celebrating 30 years at the New England Aquarium, even a princess is treated like a queen.

And how does a sea turtle celebrate?

With squid, capelin, mackerel, and shrimp! Rescued after washing ashore on a Brewster beach in November 1987, Retread was underweight and blind, and couldn’t be returned to the ocean. A favorite among the divers, Retread is alerted to feeding time when a diver rattles a PVC pipe filled with metal. Then she’s hand-fed using a stick because a sea turtle’s beak is powerful.

Visitors often spot Retread as she slowly makes her way up from the depths of the four-story Giant Ocean Tank to the surface, where she opens her mouth wide and gulps in a breath of air. She will repeat this 15-20 times before settling back down at the bottom of the tank for another restful nap.

Retread is just one of the many sea turtles the Aquarium has rescued over the years. This past fall, more than 260 cold-stunned sea turtles stranded on Cape Cod beaches. Green, loggerhead, and Kemp’s Ridley turtles—suffering from low body temperatures and other ailments—were taken to the Aquarium’s sea turtle hospital in Quincy to be treated and rehabilitated.

The goal is always to return the threatened and endangered animals to the ocean. However, not all rescued turtles can be safely returned to the wild.

That was the case with Retread, who weighed only 31 pounds when found. She appeared dead for several days after being rescued, her flippers and rear shell appeared to have suffered frostbite, and her eyes were cloudy. For most of her first year in rehabilitation, Retread’s weight fluctuated greatly. She needed assistance eating and required antibiotics.

But with diligent care and the Aquarium’s rescue team, her appetite steadily increased and her shell healed. However, it became apparent her eyesight had been permanently damaged.

However, with the approval of state and federal officials, it was decided that Retread would have to stay in captivity in order to survive. Since then, with a hand-fed diet and world-class veterinary care, she has thrived and now weighs in at about 200 pounds.

Look for Retread, one of two loggerhead sea turtles in the Giant Ocean Tank, on your next visit to the Aquarium. She is the one with a small pockmark behind her front left flipper.

— Jon Kinson
Teri Davidson
Director of Marketing

How do you entice 1.4 million people each year to plan their day around a visit to the New England Aquarium?

Ask Teri Davidson, Director of Marketing for the Aquarium. Sure, her job is made easier by the ridiculously adorable northern fur seals and California sea lions cavorting in the New Balance Foundation Marine Mammal Center. Then there’s Freya, the giant Pacific octopus, who is endlessly mesmerizing as she writhes and wriggles her way across the Olympic Coast Exhibit. And, well, penguins! Penguins!

But Teri knows that Boston has a plethora of family-friendly cultural institutions where people could choose to go. So how does she market the Aquarium to the public in new and engaging ways year after year?

Easy. She loves the Aquarium, and her enthusiasm is contagious.

“People assume the Aquarium is an awesome place to work, and the truth is, it is,” said Teri. “I have the privilege of working with some of the most brilliant minds in Boston, and we all devote our time and energy to protecting the environment.”

While Teri doesn’t conduct research on the critically endangered North Atlantic right whale, like her colleagues in the Anderson Cabot Center for Ocean Life; rescue threatened sea turtles, as her colleagues in the Quincy Animal Care Center do each year; or even scrub clean the Penguin Exhibit, as Aquarium aquarists and volunteers do each day, her role is equally important. She and her team in the Marketing and Communications Department let the world know about the Aquarium staff’s important work on behalf of the world’s oceans.

And that’s exactly what she’s doing again in 2018 with northern fur seals. Her office, in the historic Grain Exchange Building across the street from the Aquarium, is overflowing with posters and plush toys from past advertising campaigns. Here, she wades through piles of paperwork and not the waters of The Trust Family Foundation Shark and Ray Touch Tank, where aquarists get to feed sharks. But here is still a very cool job.

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“Teri is instrumental in the implementation of memorable advertising campaigns that feature beloved Aquarium animals.”

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As the marketing director, it’s Teri’s job to spread the word about adorable and vulnerable fur seals in need of humans’ help and do it with style. It begins with a marketing campaign that combines paid advertising with social media buzz from visitors and staff. Teri builds the campaign, overseeing the design of advertising materials, catchphrases, and promotion of both the entertaining and educational aspects of northern fur seals. As important as it is to the environment, Teri says it’s ultimately just plain fun. “The coolest thing about my job is overseeing the advertising campaigns every year,” said Teri. “Hopefully, most of the people reading this have seen our ads on the MBTA or heard us on the radio—there’s nothing better than seeing months of hard work come to fruition in a landscape like the Park Street T station with every available surface telling a story of how cool these animals are and engaging people to come and see them!”

What Teri doesn’t say is there are a lot of hours and hard work behind every successful campaign. Something her boss, Marketing and Communications Vice President Jane Woldson, can appreciate. “Teri combines tremendous marketing skill, great instinct, and a passion for the Aquarium and our mission,” said Jane. “She is the driving force behind our clever advertising campaigns, working with our colleagues at Connelly Partners. She is tireless in her efforts to promote the Aquarium—her enthusiasm and commitment are inspiring.”

Teri’s efforts and those of her team result in millions of people seeing their work all over Boston and beyond. Sometimes, she said, she will stand in the Park Street station simply to watch the reactions of people who view the Aquarium ads pairing clever content with adorable animals.

“It’s my job to let people know the Aquarium is here, make it so they want to visit our nearly 35,000 animals, and know what we stand for in the world—which is protecting the blue planet,” said Teri.
Seals Helping Seals—
One Scat at a Time

The New England Aquarium’s resident northern fur seals are helping their wild counterparts in an unexpected way—through their scat.

Researchers at the Anderson Cabot Center for Ocean Life at the New England Aquarium are developing methods to study hormones in fur seal feces to learn about the species’ health and reproduction. The plan is to record baseline data on healthy fur seals and then apply these techniques to study wild colonies, some of which are experiencing sharp declines.

“The advantage of developing this approach with our Aquarium population is that we know a lot about the seals,” said Katie Graham, an Anderson Cabot Center scientist. “We know their ages, sexes, behaviors, and medical histories.”

Hormones circulating in the blood act as signals for biological processes, such as reproduction, growth, and metabolism. Once they’re no longer needed by the body, these hormones eventually make their way out of the animal through feces and urine. Hormone measurements from feces can tell researchers about the recent health of the animal—for example, if a female is pregnant. By adding individualized dietary markers—including sesame seeds or lentils—to each seal’s food, the Aquarium’s Marine Mammal Team knows which poop belongs to which of our four resident fur seals.

The scientists are also receiving scat samples from the Mystic and Seattle aquariums, the only other aquariums in the U.S. with northern fur seals in residence. Collecting poop is noninvasive, so it provides the scientists with many more samples to work from than would be possible by taking blood samples.

“Our goal is to use these measurements to help us understand the threats the wild populations are facing, as well as how these threats impact their reproduction,” said Katie. The strategies developed at the Anderson Cabot Center may help the scientific community better understand the health of wild fur seal populations, inform conservation plans about their protection, and help these vulnerable populations thrive.

Inset and below: Anderson Cabot Center scientist Katie Graham works with fur seal scat samples in her lab.

Fur seal image: A northern fur seal swims through the water. (Photo: Keith Ellenbogen)

Collecting poop is noninvasive, and the New England Aquarium’s seals, and the long-term information available about their health and life history, our scientists can monitor their hormone profiles over time. A baseline of typical hormone patterns in fur seals is critical as scientists try to identify abnormal hormone patterns that could indicate that a population is in trouble. Studying fecal hormones in wild fur seals may help researchers understand if stressors, such as poor nutrition or human disturbances, could be contributing to population declines.

“This is a favorite of New England Aquarium educators because of its rich coastal habitat and its proximity to Central Wharf. Boston’s last remaining salt marsh offers unique views of plants and wildlife as you follow paths to the observation tower.

Learn More
Stay tuned! In the months ahead, Anderson Cabot Center researchers will share yet more exciting science-based solutions to problems facing our oceans. Please visit andersoncabotcenterforoceanlife.org to learn more about our work or to make a donation.

North of Boston
Middlesex Fells Reservation
Stoneham, MA
Accessible via bus service from the Orange Line
There are 100 miles of mixed-use trails for hiking, jogging, mountain biking, and horseback riding. Take in the scenic views of Boston or rent a kayak and paddle in Spot Pond. There’s even an off-leash dog area for your four-legged adventurers!

South of Boston
Blue Hills Reservation
Milton, MA
Accessible via bus service from commuter rail or Red Line
Blue Hills Reservation stretches over 7,000 acres through Quincy, Braintree, Canton, Dedham, Milton, and Randolph. Tackle 125 miles of rolling trails through forests and wetlands. Your reward for scrambling up rocky ascents is sweeping views of Boston’s skyline!

Northeast of Boston
Belle Isle Marsh
East Boston, MA
Three-minute walk from the Blue Line’s Suffolk Downs stop
This is a favorite of New England Aquarium educators because of its rich coastal habitat and its proximity to Central Wharf. Boston’s last remaining salt marsh offers unique views of plants and wildlife as you follow paths to the observation tower.

West of Boston
Cutler Park Reservation
Needham, MA
A short walk from Needham Heights commuter rail station
Birders flock to this 600-acre park that protects the largest freshwater marsh on the middle Charles River. Geology fans can also geek out on a variety of land formations featuring riverbeds and hills formed by glaciers.

As flowers pop from the soil and migratory animals return to their seasonal habitats, many people shed their winter layers and spring outside to enjoy our beautiful blue planet. There are spectacular hikes throughout New England, including some near Boston. This list is particularly special because these settings are all accessible through public transportation.

Lace up your sneakers, spritz the insect repellent, and grab your binoculars. We’re treasuring lightly on our blue planet in more ways than one!
future ocean protectors
Ocean animal fun facts for young readers

Meet the Fur Seals

Come visit and get to know our amazing group of northern fur seals, watch a training session, and meet the trainers afterward to learn more!

Luna
Birthdate: Summer 2015
Arrival: She was rescued off Laguna Beach in California as an underweight young pup. Unable to be released, she joined the New England Aquarium northern fur seal colony in 2016.
Fun Fact: She is named after the beach where she was found.
Really Fun Fact: Luna is our only fur seal who has mastered staying atop a 4-foot-wide circular float in the New Balance Foundation Marine Mammal Center. It is similar to jumping onto an ice flow! She often plays with fish, the other fur seals, our sea lion pup, and the trainers. The trainers sometimes give her a spin on the disk. Stop by to see for yourself!

Ursula
Birthdate: July 12, 1998
Arrival: Born at the New York Aquarium, Ursula joined us in 2006.
Fun Fact: She is the mother of Flaherty (2012) and Kitovi (2013).
Really Fun Fact: When Ursula relaxes on land, she makes a soft clicking sound, that is a little bit like a cat purring. Our trainers are working on putting it on a signal so guests can hear it during training sessions!

Chiidax
Birthdate: August 2013
Arrival: The Alaska Department of Fish and Game found Chiidax on its doorstep, very far from any of the rookeries where fur seals gather and pups are born. He was found as an underweight, newborn pup, so he was taken to a stranding center, where he would receive formula and the care he needed to survive. Since Chiidax had to be hand-raised, he was not able to return to the sea. To provide him with the companionship of other fur seals, he was sent to the New England Aquarium, where he is participating in a northern fur seal breeding program.
Fun Fact: His name is pronounced “chee-dack” and means small, young animal in Aleut.
Really Fun Fact: Currently weighing in at 125 pounds, Chiidax will weigh as much as 600 pounds at his peak weight!

Kitovi
Birthdate: August 6, 2013
Arrival: Born at the New England Aquarium
Fun Fact: Kitovi is named after a northern fur seal rookery on St. Paul Island, Alaska.
Really Fun Fact: She enjoys back scratches from her trainers and playing with many kinds of toys. One of her favorites is chasing a ribbon pulled along the surface of the water, similar to the way seals chase fish.
The Blue Park in Our Backyard

Roughly 180 miles southeast of Cape Cod is a park featuring canyons deeper than the Grand Canyon, giant, dormant volcanoes with peaks taller than anything east of the Rocky Mountains, and a vast amount of marine wildlife from cold water corals to endangered whales. This “blue park” is the first and only marine national monument in the U.S. waters of the Atlantic Ocean. The Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument was established in 2016 and is renowned for its incredible biodiversity.

“People call it the Serengeti of the sea,” said scientist Dr. Ester Quintana. “It’s an area that has a lot of wildlife. There are whales, dolphins, all kinds of sea turtles, and coral reefs. It’s a very productive area.”

Ester, Research Scientist at the Anderson Cabot Center for Ocean Life at the New England Aquarium, is part of a team that performs aerial surveys of the monument to help update assessments of the area’s diverse wildlife and provide evidence that proves the value of this unique blue park. The monument is located on the edge of the continental shelf as it drops into the sea.

“The monument includes depth gradients, which represent different habitats for different species. The interplay between the topography and oceanic currents has profound consequences for diversity,” said Ester. “This is part of why oceanographic canyons such as the monument are hotspots of biodiversity.”

In November 2017, Ester and her team spent a day in a small four-seater plane to perform their second and final aerial survey of the year. They made 27 observations of marine mammals in the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument and supports the idea that this area is worthy of complete protection,” said Dr. Scott Kraus, Vice President and Senior Science Advisor at the Anderson Cabot Center.

“This survey adds to our analysis showing the incredible diversity and abundance of marine mammals in the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument and supports the idea that this area is worthy of complete protection,” said Dr. Scott Kraus, Vice President and Senior Science Advisor at the Anderson Cabot Center.

“The number of calves and young animals among the dolphin groups was very high—it’s beginning to look like a nursery. Given that this is the only fully protected ocean habitat in the U.S. waters of the Atlantic, the canyons and seamounts monument is looking more precious with every survey.”

Although the monument was only declared in 2016, the 4,913 square miles of underwater canyons and seamounts have been the subject of decades of research by scientists at the New England Aquarium and colleagues at other institutions. These years of dedicated research were instrumental in the decision to protect this unique area. The cold, nutrient-rich waters represent a diverse series of rich ecosystems, include deep-sea corals, and provide food and shelter to marine life—from seabirds to rare and endangered species of sea turtles and whales.

The monument is a safe haven that gives these animals a chance to interact with each other without much human interference. “There is some boat traffic and fishing gear, but it’s not like near the coast,” said Ester. “We found lots of whales and dolphins in the area.”

“Having this protected is taking us in the right direction for conservation,” said Ester. “If we go backward, it will be harder to add these protections again in the future.”

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The Pull of The Tide
Young professionals group celebrates first year.

There is a group of young professionals rising up in Boston, and you can find them at the Aquarium! Established in 2017, The Tide is a community of young supporters making a commitment to the oceans and the New England Aquarium’s mission to protect our blue planet. More than just a social club, The Tide is committed to finding the perfect blend of philanthropy, education, and fun. Tide members enjoy networking opportunities with other young ocean stewards, unique social and educational events, and volunteer programs.

In its first year, The Tide grew to almost 100 members! The Tide’s Leadership Committee hosted several sold-out social and educational events, including a brunch on the harbor, a private reception with renowned shark researcher Dr. Nick Whitney, and a special invitation to join the studio audience for the live taping of a You’re the Expert podcast. The Tide’s momentum will keep rising in 2018, with a full slate of educational, networking, and volunteer opportunities.

Want to get in on the action?

Making Waves with The Tide
Thursday, May 3, 2018

Enjoy a kid-free evening at the Aquarium during this 21+ open house. Socialize with like-minded ocean lovers and enjoy a Tidal Wave (The Tide’s signature cocktail) while you engage with Aquarium experts from different fields and visit the Aquarium’s amazing exhibits—without the crowds!

For more information or to join The Tide, visit neaq.org/thetide or email thetide@neaq.org.

Jackie Bliss
Leadership Committee
Member, The Tide
I have a passion for the oceans and, as an avid scuba diver, I have seen firsthand the damaging impacts of climate change and pollution on the oceans. So when I heard that the New England Aquarium was launching The Tide to engage the next generation of leaders committed to ocean health and climate change solutions, I knew I wanted to get involved.

I love the opportunity to engage with like-minded people about something we care about, learn more about how we can make a difference, and support a local institution doing so much for marine animal conservation and research.

The first year of The Tide has been a huge success! There is clearly a groundswell of interest and engagement in what The Tide is doing, and it’s really exciting to be part of it. Imagine what we will accomplish in 2018? I look forward to further developing a community of people who are interested in ocean conservation efforts and creating the next generation of supporters, board members, and activists.

That’s A-Moray
Friday, February 9, 2018

A special night, indeed

Thanks to everyone who joined us for this year’s That’s A-Moray Valentine’s event on February 9. From fabulous food and lovely libations to live jazz to beat the band (that’s the Andy Baer Trio, thank you very much), it was a great night.

Congratulations to our prize winners, each of whom will be coming back to enjoy an exciting behind-the-scenes experience for two.

• Sara Ewing — “Lunch Date” (a Myrtle the turtle feeding at the top of the Giant Ocean Tank)
• Jared Pinkos — “Eight-Armed Hug” (behind-the-scene tour of the octopus exhibit)
• Katherine Hoss — “Animal Care Package” (tour of the Aquarium’s Animal Care Center in Gosling)
• John McKenzie — “For-Ever Yours” (visit behind the scenes of the New Balance Foundation Marine Mammal Center)

Also, congratulations to James Dalphond and Kate Tsui! James popped the question with the assistance of a “Will You Marry Me?” dedication sign in the Giant Ocean Tank. Happily, Kate said yes. Very best wishes to the happy couple from all of us at the Aquarium.

Our heartfelt thanks to a host of staff and volunteers for making the evening possible. And, of course, to you—our members—for your loyal support throughout the year.

Set Your Watch
Hop aboard a high-speed catamaran and be transported to a world of whales during a New England Aquarium Whale Watch. Our Whale Watch partner, Boston Harbor Cruises, ferries passengers to Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, one of the world’s best feeding areas for marine animals, where New England Aquarium-trained naturalists will share their knowledge of these beautiful behemoths.

Visit neaq.org/whale-watch to buy tickets, learn more about the trips, and read blog posts noting what has been spotted on recent trips.

Don’t forget!
Members get a discount on New England Aquarium Whale Watch trips, so bring your membership card when you come to Central Wharf.

Photo: Boston Harbor Cruises
Lectures
Free Aquarium Evening Lecture Series
All programs start at 7:00 p.m. in the Aquarium’s Simons IMAX® Theatre unless otherwise noted.

April

Thursday, May 10
Atlantic Salmon—Lost at Sea
Dive In! A Member-Exclusive Evening
6:30 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Young supporters of the Aquarium can leisurely view all the exhibits while enjoying light bites and drinks, including our signature cocktail, The Tidal Wave.
neaq.org/thetide

Thursday, May 31
Distance Vision and the Early Origins of Awareness
David Edelman, Ph.D.,
Visiting Scholar, Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences, Dartmouth College

Thursday, June 7
Marine Mammals in the Anthropocene: Keeping Endangered from Becoming Extinct
Scott Kraus, Ph.D.,
Vice President and Senior Science Advisor, Anderson Cabot Center for Ocean Life at the New England Aquarium

June

World Oceans Day Festival
11 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Aquarium’s Harbor View Terrace Tent
This fun, family-friendly festival features hands-on activities for children and opportunities to learn about efforts by the Aquarium and other local nonprofit organizations to protect the blue planet.

May

Tuesday, May 10
Atlantic Salmon—Lost at Sea—Dive In! A Member-Exclusive Evening
6:30 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Young supporters of the Aquarium can leisurely view all the exhibits while enjoying light bites and drinks, including our signature cocktail, The Tidal Wave.
neaq.org/thetide

May 5
Making Waves with The Tide
6 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.
Join us as we learn about the ocean through the stories of the communities and nations who live along its shores.
neaq.org/makingwaves

May 6
New England Right Whale Festival
11 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Harbor View Terrace Tent
The fifth annual New England Right Whale Festival, hosted by the Aquarium and co-sponsored by the Calvineers™, brings together eighth-graders from the Adams School in Castine, Maine, along with several ocean scientists. The festival is free and open to the public.
neaq.org/rwffestival

June 6
World Oceans Day Festival
11 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Aquarium’s Harbor View Terrace Tent
This fun, family-friendly festival features hands-on activities for children and opportunities to learn about efforts by the Aquarium and other local nonprofit organizations to protect the blue planet.

The Aquarium has been providing free lectures and films by scientists, environmental writers, photographers, and others since 1972 through the generosity of the Lowell Institute. Lectures are open to the public, but registration is requested.
Visit us online for the full schedule. neaq.org/aquariumlectures
Join us for a member-exclusive, family-friendly evening at the Aquarium.

**Dive In!**

**Wednesday, April 18**

6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Bring your friends and family to discover the Aquarium after the vacation crowds have left for the day. Details inside.

**VIP Premium Sunday Morning**

Premium members are invited to get an early start on adventure.

**Sunday, May 20**

Doors open at 8 a.m.