

The Voice of OCEANIA



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Website: www.hawaii.edu/mcc/oceania

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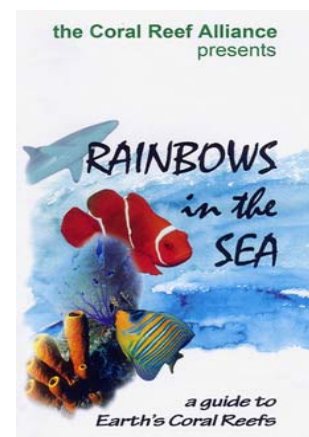
OCEANIA agrees on initiatives to activate group

OCEANIA met on April 14, 2007, at Hanalani Schools, Mililani, Oahu, in collaboration with the Hawaii Science Teachers Association spring conference. During the meeting, Petra MacGowan presented on the International Year of the Reef 2008 and Tammy Rach presented on the DolphinQuest teachers guides.

During the business portion of the meeting, OCEANIA members agreed to use the logo for the NMEA 2005 conference, held in Maui and hosted by OCEANIA, as the official OCEANIA logo. The group also voted to have an OCEANIA newsletter that

will be made assessable by email and on the OCEANIA website. Dr. Karolyn Braun of the American Samoa Community College volunteered to serve at the editor. The group also voted to meet more frequently and have some fun, ocean-related gatherings. It is hoped that through these efforts OCEANIA will become more active, provide more benefits to its members and increase its numbers.

At the conclusion of the meeting, participants were offered a variety of handouts, including posters on the *Rainbows in the Sea* video by Coral Reef Alliance and Earthwise Media as well as a



DVD and teacher's guide on building life-size, life-like anatomical models of fish provided by Jonathan Barron, a marine biology teacher in California.

Change in command at the UH Marine Option & Marine Biology Programs

Sherwood Maynard was unable to attend the April 14 OCEANIA meeting because he was attending the University of Hawaii (UH) at Manoa's Marine Option Program (MOP) Symposium. However, he sent a note to

OCEANIA to announce that beginning July 1, 2007, he will no longer be the director of MOP or of the UH at Manoa's Bachelor of Science in Marine Biology Program. Dr. Cindy Hunter will be replacing him in these two posi-

tions. He will continue to serve as director of the UH at Manoa's Biology Department and plans to retire at end of 2008.



OCEANIA membership update & survey results

Keeping track of current OCEANIA members has been challenging. Our official membership includes those residing in the U.S. flag and affiliated Pacific islands who join NMEA at the national level. A few problems have surfaced. First, unless these people register as an affiliate member belonging to the OCEANIA chapter, NMEA does not classify them as belonging to OCEANIA. Second, there currently is no system in place for NMEA national to inform OCEANIA when members from the U.S. Pacific islands join or are dropped from their register. Work is underway to rectify the situation by soliciting a

volunteer to be an OCEANIA membership officer and working to better coordinate record-keeping efforts with NMEA national.

As with other NMEA chapters, OCEANIA membership numbers swelled when we hosted the NMEA national conference. The reason is membership to NMEA is included as part of the conference fee. Therefore, in 2005, our membership jumped to 82 official members. A year later, the numbers plummeted as those who registered at the conference did not renew their NMEA membership. Our official number is now down to about a dozen, which is equal to the number of

regular participants we have at our OCEANIA meetings. However, these people are not necessarily the same, because not all of the educators who attend our meeting are official (i.e., paid) members. Recently, we've combined the list of persons from the OCEANIA geographical area from the current and 2005 NMEA database and added the lists of persons who have participated in OCEANIA meetings in recent years. Efforts are being made to encourage all 102 of the persons so listed to rejoin NMEA OCEANIA, and to join HaSTA as well. The Spring 2007 HaSTA newsletter, the *Catalyst*, sent to OCEANIA members have mailing

labels with the recipient's NMEA expiration date included, and they are being asked to check the date and renew if their membership is expired. We are also working to provide more benefits to members, including more activities and an OCEANIA newsletter.

NMEA recently asked its chapters to survey the composition of their membership. An email was sent to OCEANIA members, and 13 responses came back. Here are the results: 1 teacher (K-12); 1 nonformal science center; 1 nonformal aquarium; 5 University instructor/professor and 4 state / federal government. Clearly, we need to work on recruiting more K-12 teachers.

Efforts underway to prepare for the International Year of the Reef

The International Year of the Reef (IYOR) will be celebrated in 2008 to raise public awareness and protection of reefs. Efforts are already underway locally, nationally and internationally to make this coordinated but decentralized event a success.

Petra MacGowan of the Hawaii Division of Aquatic Resources (HDAR) is taking the lead to coordinate events

in Hawaii. MacGowan is the chair of the IYOR Committee of the Hawaii Coral Reef Outreach Network (CRON). The CRON website at www.hawaiireef.org will be the clearing house for IYOR-related events in Hawaii.

Contact MacGowan at Petra.MacGowan@hawaii.gov.

OCEANIA is working to

organize a coral spawning event on July 16, 2007, in part to consider IYOR activities it might want to pursue to celebrate IYOR in 2008.

JoAnn Leong of the Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology, Dave Gulko of the Hawaii Department of Aquatic Resources, Mark Heckman of the Waikiki Aquarium and Dr. Cindy Hunter of the University of Hawaii have been helping OCEANIA representative Sylvia Spalding on planning the 2007 event.

On the national level, the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force's Outreach and Education Working Group has made IYOR the focus of its monthly meetings.

NMEA is considering dedicating one of its 2008 issues of *Current* to coral reefs, but it needs a sponsor.

On the international level, the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) dedicated much of its meeting in April to IYOR. Alissa Barron of the NOAA Coral Reef Program stopped by Honolulu on her return from the ICRI meeting in Japan to present an update on IYOR. Her presentation at the NOAA Pacific Services Center's blue bag lunch on April 30 was well attended. Barron noted that during the ICRI meeting the IYOR 2008 logo had been selected. To view the logo, go to the IYOR official website www.iyor.org.



Alissa Barron presents on the upcoming International Year of the Reef