



# AQUATIC & FISHERY SCIENCES NEWS

SCHOOL OF AQUATIC & FISHERY SCIENCES COLLEGE OF THE ENVIRONMENT UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

[fish.washington.edu/newsletter](http://fish.washington.edu/newsletter)

- 1 From the Director
- 2 SAFS and Social Media
- 5 Awards & Honors
- 5 Alumni Update
- 5 Consider a Gift
- 6 In Memoriam: Russel P. Herwig
- 8 Washington Fish and Wildlife Cooperative Unit

## From the Director

Dear alumni and many friends:

It is spring. The birds, they are a'singing, and the grass, it is a'growing, and of course the Dunk Tank, it is a'dunking. Yes, this year's SAFS Spring Picnic saw the return of the Dunk Tank after a year's absence. Organized by David McGowan (PhD, Horne), this year's event featured even colder water and new participants willing to sacrifice their dignity to support grad students.

David held an e-vote to select the dunkees, this time including alums and affiliate faculty. This year's dunkees included previous favorites such as Daniel Schindler, Ray Hilborn, and myself and a few "faculty first-timers"—Gordon Holtgrieve, Jim Seeb, Chris Anderson, and John Horne. Others dropped into the icy depths included James Thorson (PhD, 2011), NOAA scientist, alum, and SAFS affiliate assistant professor. It was a family event as usual, with children and partners ensuring that everyone was wet by the end of the day and that the kitty supporting grad student travel was substantially enhanced. Many thanks to everyone who organized the event and who contributed their time and dignity.

As I mentioned in the previous issue of the newsletter, the SAFS community was shocked by the passing of SAFS Research Associate Professor Emeritus Russell Herwig earlier this year. This issue includes a memorium for Russ written by Marcus Duke (former editor of the SAFS newsletter), with contributions from many of Russ' family, friends, colleagues, and past students.

My career has involved identifying research questions, conducting analyses, publishing the results in scientific journals, and presenting them at conferences and management meetings. However, the advent of social media has expanded the ways in which SAFS faculty, students, and staff communicate with the broader community and collaborate with their numerous research partners. In this issue, we focus on three faculty members and a graduate student, who are leading the charge into the use of social media. While I learned a lot about social media while preparing this article, as of today, I remain tweet-free (unlike Ray Hilborn who is now tweeting at <https://twitter.com/hilbornr> on topics as diverse as salmon runs, carbon footprints of fisheries, and the status of world fisheries).

As you may know, Chris Grue, the leader of the Washington Cooperative Unit, retired from federal service after 37 years last year. Dave Beauchamp is the acting unit leader while Chris continues as a SAFS faculty member, teaching his classes on recreational fisheries and toxicology.

—continued on page 12

Photos (left to right):  
Jackie Carter, Jeremy Monroe,  
Amanda Phillips, Jonathan Moore

# W

Spring/Summer  
2015

# SAFS and Social Media

—André Punt, Director



Getting the message out! Many of us communicate the results of our research through reports, journal articles, presentations at conferences and meetings, and occasionally the news media. However, a growing number of faculty, staff, and students at SAFS are using social media to share their research, as well as their thoughts on topical issues (not to mention jokes with a fishy flavor).

Social media is a continually evolving set of web platforms where people can share and exchange ideas, information, and content. Facebook is the most commonly used, and both Facebook and Twitter are the “standard” sites that those I talked to use, but there are many others (as I found out talking to the experts). Effective use of social media can increase outreach enormously: One of Trevor Branch’s tweets was seen by 17,000 people. For this article, I asked three of our faculty, Trevor Branch (TB), Julian Olden (JO), and Steven Roberts (SR), and PhD student Megsie Siple (MS; advisors: Essington/Beauchamp, co-chairs] about their experiences with social media and how they think it will revolutionize the way we do science.

*AP: Why did you choose social media for outreach?*

SR: We live in a web native world where most of our research findings are electronic and often of great value to others. Social media is a “low barrier” means to engage with others. It is also scalable—one can take a minute to reply to a tweet or spend hours writing blog posts, posting publication reviews, or contributing to a GitHub project.

TB: Liz Neeley at COMPASS convinced me. I started using Twitter for the Aldo Leopold Leadership course, because it has the potential to reach a large audience. In my case, that was around 400,000 total readings per month. My tweets are read by academics, fishers, non-governmental organizations, funders, teachers, and random people interested in fisheries. And, of course, journalists. Many of the connections I have with journalists arise from tweets.

MS: I use Twitter and sometimes Facebook to communicate with scientists and non-scientists. I used it during my master’s degree program to update the Hawaiian community on the research I was doing in one of their important cultural sites. (AP: Check out Megsie’s blog at <https://twitter.com/margaretsiple>)

JO: Willingly or unwillingly, all scientists have entered into a social contract to disseminate their science to the broader public. Social media provides one of many avenues to help fulfill this obligation. The social media landscape provides endless opportunities to communicate science—from smaller bite-sized nuggets of knowledge to larger stories that highlight substantial scientific discoveries.

*AP: What social media are you involved with?*

TB: Twitter, although I also have a Facebook account, but I don’t use that for work.

MS: Twitter is my way to engage with people online. I joined in 2010 because I wanted to follow writers and bloggers whose work I enjoyed, and then it became a tool for communicating science. I like Twitter for several reasons, such as that the abbreviated nature of tweets requires a lot of thought on the part of the writer—if you’re tweeting thoughtfully, it is an exercise in writing concisely, and the “news feed” style interface is awesome for digesting a lot of material from several sources in a short amount of time.

JO: I interact with a number of social media platforms, including Twitter, figshare, slideshare, and a number of popular blogging sites.

SR: I have several Twitter accounts. I distribute code using GitHub and also use Facebook.

*AP: Steven, I know what Twitter and Instagram are, but what are Tumblr, Flickr, PinBoard, figshare, and slideshare?*

SR: They are additional web platforms used to share



and exchange content. Tumblr is a simple blogging platform; Flickr is for photos and videos; Pinboard is a way to share bookmarks on the web; slideshare is for, well, for slides; figshare is probably the most interesting as it is a platform for sharing any type of research product, including figures, media, datasets, posters, papers, theses, code, presentations, and filesets.

*AP: What sorts of things do you communicate using social media?*

SR: Everything—data, pictures, videos, papers, lab meetings, student defences, lab notebooks, and lab accomplishments.

JO: My thumb is pretty selective when it comes to Twitter. I typically report on new science arising from my lab or faculty and students from the College of the Environment. Data and conference presentations are routinely posted on figshare and slideshare.

TB: Latest research on fisheries, whales, etc. I tweet about my research and that of others in SAFS and my lab. I live tweet from most departmental and quantitative seminars to expand the audience. I also tweet R programming tips. And, I ask questions I need answered and poll followers on controversial topics such as “Do you think we should use the term fishers or fishermen?”

*AP: Describe some “fun thing” that has arisen through your social media involvement.*

TB: I got involved in a paper through tweeting; the authors were tweeting their initial results and I helped them find better data and ended up co-writing the paper. The amount of online attention paid to this paper (news, TV, online media, blogs) puts it at No. 358 out of all 3.5 million scientific papers ever published. I am also working on a paper on gender issues in fisheries related to whether we use the term fishers or fishermen. Some of my tweets

have been seen by more than 10,000 people and include the whimsical (cherry blossoms at UW) to the funny (side-by-side snapshots of paper titles vs. journalist pieces titled “this is why we need journalists”) to the serious (trends in Antarctic blue whales over time showing massive declines).

MS: I once offered a bounty to people on Twitter who could define cohort resonance in a single tweet. Two of them won a few dollars. It was fun because that is a nearly impossible task, and it connected me with people I’ve never met, but who share my interests. I also tweeted mini-abstracts for all of the papers I read for my PhD qualifying exam.

*AP: How will social media change the way we do and present science?*

SR: It will allow us to share and communicate our science to a broader audience in a more efficient manner.

TB: There will be much more pre-review of results, a broader audience for what we do, greater connections, and greater ease at linking up with experts.

MS: Social media has already encouraged more collaboration. My research and teaching have already been improved by using Twitter. It should also break down some of the barriers around individual projects—sharing early and often, if we do it right, could lead to a scientific community that is more productive overall. Scientists can use social media to hear what others care about. I think scientists’ ability to engage and listen to diverse people will benefit science and society.

*AP: Trevor, why do we need more review of results. Surely, the peer-review process does that?*

TB: Getting preliminary results out allows for earlier comment, new perspectives, and for people to note data and relevant references to cite. Assuming they don’t use the results to scoop you, of course!

# SAFS and Social Media

—continued

AP: *What do you see as the next “big thing?” How will it change what you do?*

SR: A post-publication, peer-review platform. Results will be immediately “published” and then subjected to peer review and improvements based on comments.

MS: I look forward to social media being more flexible and creative. We are all so diverse in the ways we communicate; it is sort of strange to me that there are only a few giant media filters. Something like a Facebook page doesn’t leave room for a lot of creativity and innovation in the content or the presentation.

TB: I think Twitter is already the next big thing. All 5 billion of us won’t be posting soon, but it is very influential; just look at how traditional media latches onto particular tweets, and they are reported all over. It’s a quick and instant feedback when a paper comes out that is obviously wrong.

JO: I think there are lots of exciting opportunities on the horizon. Video-oriented science media should continue to grow, and I can’t wait to see how technological advances will allow Google Glass to innovate the way that people experience nature in both urban and wild settings (AP: I am ready for this!).

AP: *Lastly, what fun fact don’t we know about you?*

JO: I find Twitter annoying, but I still do it!

SR: I do not have a personal Facebook account!

MS: I joined Facebook in 2004 when it was still called “The Facebook”... it has plagued me ever since!

TB: I run several Twitter accounts. My main one is @TrevorABranch, but I also have @BlueWhaleNews, which does what it says! (AP: Check out Trevor’s blogs at <https://twitter.com/trevorabbranch> and <https://twitter.com/bluewhalenews>.)

AP: If you want to follow Trevor, Steven, Julian, and Megsie on Twitter, find them at @TrevorABranch, @sr320, @oldenfish, and @margaretsiple, respectively.



# Awards & Honors

## Students

*Degree track and faculty advisers in parentheses*

Rachelle Johnson (BS), Jordan Lee (BS), Keith Fritschie (MS, Olden), Brittany Jones (MS, Simenstad), Joseph Bizzarro (PhD, Summers), and Tim Walsworth (PhD, Schindler) were given SAFS Faculty Merit Awards for 2015. This award annually recognizes outstanding efforts by students who have achieved high scholastic standing in the program.

Erika Sutherland (MS, Olden) netted a Research Grant from the Northwest Scientific Association. William Chen (MS, Olden), Erika Sutherland (MS, Olden) and Erica Escajeda (MS, Laidre) all obtained National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowships.

Stuart Munsch (PhD, Simenstad) received the Best Graduate Student Oral Presentation Honorable Mention at the Pacific Estuarine Research Society Annual Meeting in March 2015.

Felipe Hurtado-Ferro (PhD, Punt) received a letter of commendation from Don McIsaac (PhD, 1990), Executive Director of the Pacific Fishery Management Council for his contribution to the re-evaluation of the harvest control rule for Pacific sardine.

Benjamin Miller (PhD, Holtgrieve) was awarded the Boren Graduate Fellowship for International Study.

Tyler Dann (PhD, Seeb J) and Wesley Larson (PhD, Seeb L) obtained Hall Conservation Genetics Research Awards to work on student-directed projects.

Kelli Johnson (PhD, Punt) received a NMFS-Sea Grant Population Dynamics Fellowship.

Maite Pons (PhD, Hilborn) won the Manuel Caboz Memorial Scholarship for her talk, "Setting total allowable catches leads to rebuilding of tuna and billfish stocks," at the 66th Annual Tuna Conference.



l to r: Benjamin Miller, Kelli Johnson, Maite Pons, Keith Fritschie

Photos: Rachel Faircloth

# Alumni Update

Update your record and sign up for the newsletter by email.

Our spring–summer issues are distributed online only (email), but the fall–winter issues continue to be published in print and online.

If you are still receiving printed newsletters, please consider switching to email. If you would like to do so or if you need to update your contact information (or both), go to the following UW Alumni Subscription Center and/or SAFS Alumni Update webpages (applies to alumni and friends):

- Update your contact information  
[www.washington.edu/alumni/services/update-your-information](http://www.washington.edu/alumni/services/update-your-information)
- Change newsletter subscription format  
[depts.washington.edu/safs/alumni/update.php](http://depts.washington.edu/safs/alumni/update.php)



Left to right: Sean Luis, Amanda Phillips

## Consider a Gift inspire *new* ideas

support the School of Aquatic and Fishery Sciences and the University of Washington with a gift in your will  
[giving.uw.edu/planned-giving](http://giving.uw.edu/planned-giving)

For questions, please contact:

Office of Planned Giving

206-685-1001 [giftinfo@uw.edu](mailto:giftinfo@uw.edu)

# In Memoriam

## Russell P. Herwig, 1952–2015

Sources: *The Seattle Times*, Linda Herwig, Jeffery Cordell, Ann Baxter, Lissa Crosson, and Mark Strom



Russ Herwig passed away unexpectedly at home on January 28th at age 62.

Russ was born in Abington, Pennsylvania. In high school, he became a varsity athlete, participating in cross country and track and field. Russ also played trombone in the high school concert and marching bands.

Russ earned his BS in biology, *cum laude*, from Muhlenberg College, and an MA in marine sciences from the College of William and Mary, where he studied the response of bacteria to a crude oil spill in a salt marsh. He earned his PhD in fisheries—concentrating on marine microbiology—from the UW School of Fisheries in 1989. Under Dr. John Liston’s supervision, he studied the ecology and properties of *Bdellovibrio*, a genus of aerobic bacteria.

After completing his PhD, Russ worked with Professor James Staley at the UW School of Medicine’s Microbiology Department, first as a postdoc and then, starting in 1991, as a research assistant professor. While at Microbiology, his research projects took him to distant coastlines, including those of Iceland and Antarctica. He continued his connection with Microbiology by serving as an adjunct faculty member after joining the SAFS faculty in 1995.

At SAFS, Russ taught and conducted research for nearly two decades before retiring recently. He chaired 11 graduate student committees. He also served as a marine water ballast specialist for Washington Sea Grant.

Several foci dominated Russ’ research interests: He conducted basic microbiology studies of marine organisms, including larval sablefish and rockfish. He helped develop the genome for *Cycloclasticus pugetii*, a marine bacterium discovered in the 1990s by UW microbiologists and capable of degrading environmental pollutants such as polychlorinated biphenyls and poly-

cyclic aromatic hydrocarbons. Russ and his students also studied the ecology of *Vibrio* species, harmful algal blooms, fish immunology, and the microbiology of contaminated groundwater sites.

Anne Baxter (MS 2010, Russ Herwig and Mark Strom, co-chairs) pursued her graduate studies on *Vibrio* intertidal ecology under Russ’ mentorship. She reflected on her experiences with him: “Russ was a great advisor and a fantastic instructor, and he always provided me with enthusiastic moral support. I have fond memories of him when I was a student in his Aquatic Microbiology class: he took us to Portage Bay below the Agua Verde restaurant to sample for fecal coliforms and hydrocarbon-degrading bacteria.”

Another major research focus for Russ was the introduction of nonindigenous viruses, bacteria, phytoplankton, and zooplankton through ship ballast water. He first became interested in this issue when the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) invited him and other researchers to address ballast water risks and management.

Russ partnered with the US Geological Survey to test the effectiveness of ballast water treatment methods—including UV light, ozone, and chlorine. He helped conduct experiments using an ozone generation and treatment system on the crude oil carrier *Tonsina*. Russ’ USGS work led to a program to sample plankton in ballast waters of vessels entering Washington waters (see Ballast Water Research at the Western Fisheries Research Center at <http://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/2006/3080/fs20063080.pdf>). This work has been continued by the UW and WDFW for many years and has yielded one of the most comprehensive ballast water biological datasets in the world.

Another lasting legacy from Russ Herwig’s ballast water research is the testing and evaluation facility

aboard the California Maritime Academy's training ship, *Golden Bear*. Russ' conceptualization of this facility led to the development of one of the world's only ship-based laboratories available for ballast water treatment testing.

Russ was well respected as an instructor. Lisa Crosson (MS 2011, Carolyn Friedman, chair) worked with Russ as a teaching assistant in his Aquatic Microbiology course. She recollected, "I always appreciated Russ' passion and excitement for the microbial world. He always stressed to his students the importance of microbes by telling interesting, relatable stories and sharing case studies that clearly demonstrated how essential microbes are for survival. He made us look at the world with a different perspective."

Throughout his life, Russ continued his love of sports, even participating in one Boston Marathon. Most recently, in the summer of 2014, he won his age group in a Seattle Triathlon. He was a certified track official and also volunteered at the Seattle Aquarium. Russ was an avid cyclist and each year recruited SAFS and other UW denizens to join him in the UW team's

participation in the Ride in the Rain event—not for the light-hearted, this event challenged participants to ride their bicycles to work as often as possible for the entire month of November.

Long-time colleague and close friend Mark Strom, who met Russ at UW Microbiology, was a frequent running partner. Mark reminisced: "He was always faster than me; for a long time, I would just see him at the start and end of races. In the mid 1980s, we turned to triathlons and trained together a lot. I'll never forget one of the last triathlons we did—I had a great swim, one of my best bike times, and thought I had Russ. But about 8k through the 10k run, I heard steps getting closer and closer, and there he was. He immediately said, 'Let's just finish together', and that he was too tired from trying to catch me to really 'race' the rest of the way. However, I have always thought the real reason was that generosity of spirit that he always displayed with everyone he knew."

Russ' wife, Linda, requests that remembrances be made to the American Heart Association or a charity of your choice. ■

—Marcus Duke

Photos: Courtesy of UW College of the Environment & SAFS Archives



# Washington Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Unit

—André Punt, Director

## The Coop

Since its inception, the Washington Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Unit (Coop) has had a home at SAFS. The Coop's administrative and faculty offices are housed in the UW Fishery Sciences Building. Although located on campus, the Coop and its staff are federally (not state) funded.

According to Dave Beauchamp, the current acting unit leader, the national Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit program was started in the 1930s. Its primary role is to advise and mentor graduate students, teach graduate-level courses, and provide state and federal resource management agencies with research support. Units typically consist of a unit leader and two assistant unit leaders.

The Washington Coop Unit was formed in 1967 as a fisheries-only unit within the then College of Fisheries. Richard (Dick) Whitney was the first unit leader, and Gil Pauley joined shortly after as the assistant unit leader—fisheries. The Washington Coop was expanded to a Fish and Wildlife Research Unit in 1989, which coincided with Chris Grue's arrival as unit leader. In 1994, the unit expanded its wildlife chops by recruiting Glenn VanBlaricom, who brought his expertise in marine mammals and marine benthic ecology to campus. Dave was recruited in 1999 after Gil retired. When Chris retired as unit leader in 2014, Dave took over as acting unit leader. "I am anxiously awaiting the recruitment of a new colleague and unit leader," he said. Completing the Coop team is Verna Blackhurst, the unit's manager of operations.

## The Coop Team

### Dave Beauchamp, Acting Unit Leader

Dave was born and raised in southern California. As a boy, he spent summer vacations in the Pacific Northwest. These vacations convinced him that there were more desirable regions of the country than the urban-suburban sprawl of Los Angeles and Orange counties.

"I always loved fishing and science and was intrigued by what influenced the behavior and productivity of trout—melding my interests into a career in fish biology seemed natural. I also seriously considered becoming a professional musician (he still plays the sax and clarinet), but realized this was probably easier to maintain as an avocation rather than a vocation so I headed into science."

When he was in high school, Dave didn't realize that degrees in fish biology and fisheries existed, but was helped by a cousin who told him about Fisheries at UW.

"I was hooked, but couldn't afford out-of-state tuition. Fortunately, a Navy ROTC scholarship allowed me to major in fisheries at UW, with the dream of flying jets off aircraft carriers. I aimed to get a BS and become a bush pilot in Alaska, but fisheries classes and work as a research tech changed that. Master's and PhD research under Dick Whitney's mentorship at UW simply confirmed matters."

Dave took a postdoc position at Utah State University, studying native fish ecology in Lake Tahoe. The postdoc transitioned into a research faculty position and then to assistant unit leader—fish at the Utah Coop Unit. Utah is



left: Dick Whitney, the first Coop unit leader;  
right: Dave Beauchamp—  
in the field, with his band;

Photos, l to r: Courtesy of Dave Beauchamp, and Washington Coop archives





the second driest state in the country, and this prompted Dave to work on many of the large lakes and reservoirs around the west (Tahoe, Yellowstone, Flathead, Bear, Strawberry, etc.). By the time the Washington Coop position was advertised, he'd spent nearly a decade in Utah.

"I tell folks that I had to go into exile in the desert for 10 years before I was allowed to come back home to SAFS," Dave said.

According to Dave, both the Washington and Utah positions were appealing because of the emphasis on graduate teaching and research. For him, a Coop position provides the right balance of graduate mentoring and teaching and the opportunity to conduct both basic and applied research while working with resource managers and other stakeholders.

Much of Dave's research relates to salmonids. The research he and his team have conducted has informed management of large western lake food webs, examined the effects of non-native species on host communities, and explored the implications of climate change on trophic interactions, productivity, and range shifts of native and non-native species. He is currently examining patterns of size-selective mortality in juvenile salmon in the Salish Sea, predation on juvenile sockeye salmon and other pelagic fishes in Lake Washington, and food web implications for re-introducing anadromous salmonids above historically impassable dams or the feasibility of re-introducing previously extirpated native salmonids.

Dave's group has used controlled lab experiments to measure visual capabilities of salmonids foraging on juvenile salmon or forage fish. Dave said, "This work provides insight into how the role of visual predators shifts within or among food webs as the visual environment changes."

Dave's "life beyond SAFS" includes playing and listening to music (primarily jazz and blues), fishing, hiking, team sports, reading, and enjoying time with his family and friends.

When asked for one fact that we don't already know about him, Dave replied: "In high school, I co-led a jazz saxophone sextet that included a young drummer named Matt Sorum, who later became the drummer for "Guns N'Roses" and "Velvet Revolver!"

### Chris Grue, former unit leader-retired 2014

When Chris finished high school, he wanted to join the Coast Guard's Officer Training Program and would have been accepted had he not indicated he did not want to leave high school before graduation. In addition, he wanted to be a dentist! However, in his last year of college at UC Santa Barbara, he took a 3-quarter natural history course taught by Dr. Mary Erickson and studied the breeding biology of white-tailed kites in the Goleta Slough. That led to graduate training in ornithology at Northern Arizona University and at Texas A&M, which in turn led to employment at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, studying the effects of contaminants on songbirds.

Chris became the Coop unit leader in 1989 when the unit expanded to a combined Fish and Wildlife Research Unit. "I became interested in the Coop program in the late 1980s, when my wife and I began looking for a permanent residence and an opportunity to expand my research interests," said Chris.

According to Chris, "The unit leader's responsibility is to ensure that the mission of the unit program is realized by conducting research in support of the cooperating federal and state agencies (USFWS/USGS; Washington Departments

### Chris Grue—in the field and making a new friend.

Photos, Courtesy of Verna Blackhurst and Washington Coop archives





Glenn VanBlaricom (left) in the field with undergraduate student Michelle Ruge, working on her capstone project. (right) Glenn, off duty. Photos: Kristina VanBlaricom



of Ecology, Natural Resources, and Fish and Wildlife; UW; and Washington State University), supporting graduate student training, providing technical assistance to the cooperating agencies, and disseminating research findings. Chris said that the Washington Coop is the only one in the United States with three cooperating state agencies and two cooperating universities. In addition, the unit's leader and assistant leaders serve as UW faculty, teaching in both SAFS and the School of Environmental and Forest Sciences (SEFS).

Chris summarized his duties as, "Happy co-operators—happy unit—happy unit leaders." He also mentioned that having two "employers," the US Geological Survey and the UW, with the associated responsibilities and expectations, can make the job particularly challenging.

Chris retired from his position in the Coop in 2014, but is still affiliated with the UW. "I continue to teach within SAFS and SEFS. I am also working with my former graduate students to get their theses and dissertations published."

In his free time, Chris enjoys fishing. Next year, his wife will retire from her position as a children's librarian in Poulsbo. Chris said, "We hope to spend more time at our cabin above Lake Cle Elum, on our boat, and with our first grandchild, who is due in August."

### Glenn VanBlaricom, assistant unit leader—wildlife

Glenn obtained his PhD in 1977 from the Scripps Institution of Oceanography and then took a position as research wildlife biologist with the USFWS, working on the ecosystem-scale ecology of sea otters along the Big Sur coast of California, and in Prince William Sound, Alaska. Glenn said, "With my background in coastal oceanography and

marine ecosystem analyses, it seemed I was a good fit for the position." During his tenure with the USFWS, Glenn served as an associate adjunct professor in the Institute for Marine Sciences at the University of California, Santa Cruz, where he taught courses in coastal marine ecology and advised five MS students.

A friend and USFWS colleague, manatee biologist Tom O'Shea, called Glenn's attention to the newly created position of assistant unit leader-wildlife in the Washington Coop. Glenn said, "Because I was a native of Washington and a UW graduate, a faculty position relating to marine sciences at UW had always been my dream job, and family issues centered in western Washington provided further incentive."

Since joining the unit, Glenn has conducted research in collaboration with four of the Coop's formal co-operators and has mentored 17 doctoral and 21 MS students. The range of topics on which he and his students have published is extensive—nearshore ecosystems to extensive work on sea otters, harbor seals, humpback whales, and Steller and California sea lions.

Glenn's former graduate students now work in natural resource research; management or conservation; as university faculty; in local, state, and federal governmental agencies; in tribal resource management departments; at the United Nations Headquarters in New York; and in private consulting firms. One of his PhD students, Kristin Laidre, is now a SAFS faculty member.

Glenn has taught the marine mammalogy course at SAFS since 1995. This class has students from all over campus, including Art, History, English Literature, and Drama. He has conducted a monthly series of seminars in

Verna Blackhurst (center) with her predecessors at the Coop—Sheila Wilkins (left) and Barbara Funke (right). Verna, eye level with a four-legged friend.

Photos, l to r: Courtesy of Washington Coop archives and Verna Blackhurst



Olympia that brings UW scientists involved in research on natural ecosystems to the state's capitol for the benefit of state agency scientists and managers who are interested in research developments at UW, but who cannot often attend seminars on the Seattle campus because of time and transportation issues.

Glenn has been active on advisory panels and scientific societies. Since 2004, he has served as a member of the Western Gray Whale Advisory Panel, a program of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature involved in mitigating the impacts of expanding Russian development of offshore petroleum resources in the summer feeding grounds of the western gray whale population in the Sea of Okhotsk.

When asked for a fact about himself that we do not readily know, Glenn replied: "From 1965 until 1972, I was a professional entertainer, working live on the air at KMAS Radio in Shelton, Washington, where I was born and raised. I served as a disc jockey, news reporter, and producer of advertising "spots" for air play. I also did both live and recorded remote broadcasts of high school football games and band concerts. The experience led to a job offer to work as the official public address announcer for regular professional drag racing events during summer months at the Shelton Airport. I declined the offer—something about getting on with becoming a marine biologist."

When not conducting research on geoducks, sea otters, and sea lions, Glenn enjoys birding and reading. He considers himself an "advanced intermediate" birder.

In addition to continuing his field research on endangered abalone populations, Glenn is currently working on two books about marine conservation.

### Verna Blackhurst, manager of operations

Verna is the glue that holds the Coop unit together.

Verna grew up on a wheat and cattle ranch in north Idaho. She said, "I learned from my mom and dad the importance of being good stewards of our land and water and all that comes from doing so."

In 2001, Verna was working at the UW Grant and Contract Accounting Office when she saw the listing for a position in the Coop unit. She had worked with the then SAFS administrator, Gary Pedersen, when he was in Chemistry. Verna said, "I was also intrigued by the work the Coop was engaged in. Fish and Wildlife in the title definitely got my attention." She applied for the position, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Verna job is varied and complex. She said, "I do my best to keep the train on the tracks! Every day can bring a new surprise. But a few things stand out. The first is how consistently we attract amazing students with tremendous potential. The other is how far our net can be cast (no pun intended) with the diversity of projects in which we are involved."

Verna's ability to "keep the train on the tracks" has been regionally and nationally acknowledged and praised. The Coop unit's leaders and cooperating agencies unanimously supported her for the Administrative Excellence Award from the Wildlife Management Institute, which she received in 2014. ■

—From the Director, continued from page 1

The changes in unit leadership led me to wonder about the Washington Coop and its staff in their joint roles as SAFS/UW faculty members and as federal employees. So, I went to the source—Chris, Dave, Glenn VanBlaricom, and Verna Blackhurst. Read about the Coop and its members in this newsletter.

Your gifts continue to strengthen the program. Donations supporting the endowments established in memory of José “Lobo” Orensanz and Lee Alverson have been generously funded, and we are already using the Lobo Orensanz Fund to support outstanding graduate students. We will continue to celebrate the work conducted by Lobo through a special Bevan Series Symposium in April 2016, which will be focused on climate, ecology, and fisheries for invertebrates of the North Pacific. More details will be forthcoming.

SAFS will be hosting a reunion during the 2015 American Fisheries Society Meeting in Portland, Oregon, for alums and friends to meet and for David Armstrong’s retirement celebration. The reception will take place on 17 August from 6:00 to 10:00 pm in the Skyline II Room at the Portland Hilton Hotel (921 SW Sixth Avenue). You should have received an invite from us, but if you haven’t and wish to attend, please contact [safsasst@uw.edu](mailto:safsasst@uw.edu) for details.

Best wishes for a sunny, productive, yet relaxing summer.

—André Punt, Director

## AQUATIC & FISHERY SCIENCES NEWS

The *Aquatic & Fishery Sciences Newsletter* provides current information on teaching, research, and service.

Director                    *André Punt*  
Associate Director      *Tim Essington*  
Writer & Editor          *André Punt*  
Graphic Designer        *Cathy Schwartz*  
Contributing Writer      *Marcus Duke*

Comments are welcome.

Please call André Punt at 206-221-6319  
or email [aepunt@uw.edu](mailto:aepunt@uw.edu)

- I wish to discontinue receiving this publication.
- My address has changed and I have made corrections to the label. Please mail this to the return address provided above.

School of Aquatic & Fishery Sciences  
University of Washington  
1122 Boat Street NE  
Box 355020  
Seattle, WA 98195-5020  
<http://fish.washington.edu>