

## Friends of the University of Georgia Marine Institute

Sapelo Island, Georgia, USA

Martha Odum

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### Meet Dr. Melissa Booth

*An e-interview with Beth Richardson*

*Q. You've been settling into your new job at the Marine Institute (MI). Has it been two years already? Your research focuses on monitoring the influence of environmental conditions on viruses, prokaryotes and microbial eukaryotes in the marine and estuarine environment. How are your studies going? Has the direction of your research changed since you've been at the MI? I know your appointment requires you to do both administrative work and research - wearing two hats is never easy.*

*A. As a microbial ecologist, I study the molecular responses of bacteria living in marine environments. I have been focused on responses to ultraviolet light, and genes involved*

*in the nitrogen cycle. I am excited to expand my research into the estuarine environment. Although the complexity inherent to this dynamic ecosystem can seem intractable, I find the idea of studying community responses of microbes across an entire estuarine ecosystem intriguing. I am also excited to be in a location that has produced prominent and seminal research in ecosystem ecology and microbial ecology. Since arriving here 21 months ago, I have added marine viruses to my repertoire, and have expanded my studies of the nitrogen cycle to include genes involved in the carbon cycle as well. I have recently received funding for this work in collaboration with two professors at UGA, Dr. Mary Ann Moran of Marine Sciences, and Dr. Barney Whitman of Microbiology. The project is a continuation of Dr. Moran's Sapelo Island Microbial Observatory.*

*Q. Would you share with us the benefits and challenges of living on-site?*

*A. Most importantly, there is quietude and inspiration around every corner. My creativity juices have really flowed here. A major benefit*  
*Melissa Booth interview continues on Page 4*





## A note from the Pres.- we rode the wave in '07 The Greenhouse Project and the Old Dormitory selected for the *Places in Peril* list of The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation!

Happy New Year to you all!

I want to start 2008 off by thanking everyone for their membership in the Friends. Your donations make possible all the good work we are doing (and trying to do - see our Projects List on page 8).

The Greenhouse Project celebrated its one year anniversary in late October and in November we received word that the greenhouse was selected for the 2008 **Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation's** list of *Places in Peril*. The Administration building/old dormitory also made the list (nominated by Ken Thomas). Special thanks go to Nancy Beckemeyer for nominating the greenhouse. We look forward to working with The Trust and having their support in our fund raising efforts! My thanks to Jason Coley of **Georgia Power** and the **Asplundh Tree Crew** for removing trees from and around the greenhouse! Bravo! I greatly appreciate all the Friends who've volunteered their time and put sweat equity into the Greenhouse Project. My continued thanks and a

big shout-out go to Jon, Jane, & Orin Garbisch, James Maund, Lloyd Dunn, Jane & Olivia Boyd, Karl Scott, Nancy & Elizabeth Beckemeyer, Chris Beam. Olivia is helping increase student membership and the Franklin College Residential Students volunteered their time once again during fall break. Volunteer numero uno is Nancy S. Beckemeyer. Hands down she is the Volunteer of the Year (see story pg 5). She is a Friend indeed!

A Greenhouse Project Meeting was held at the MI on January 8-10, 2008. Our meeting facilitator was Jim Smith - the glasshouse restoration specialist who did the *2004 Needs Assessment & Evaluation* on the greenhouse. Besides Jim and myself meeting attendees included Bill Miller (Director of the MI), Stone Workman, Ricky Sweat & Mitsy Lister (USDA GA Rural Development), Mike & Susan Starr (GA Trust for Historic Preservation), Nancy Beckemeyer (volunteer of the year!), Lloyd Dunn (retired GA Tech. Botany Professor), Jon Garbisch (MI Program Coordinator), Linda Bachman (UGA Franklin College

External Affairs), Scott Messer (UGA Architect's Office) and Missy Brandt (Secretary, McIntosh County Historic Preservation Commission). This work session helped clear the air on the project and move it forward in a positive direction. My heartfelt thanks to everyone who participated. **Jim Smith rocks!**

Azalea Cottage now has a collection of wonderful furniture donated by Scott & Jennifer Messer, Chris Beam, and mainly Susan & Mike Starr. It's lovely - Thank You!

Jon's Wishlist (see page 8) got a hit! A big thank you goes to Eugene Keferl for donating an outboard motor. You made Jon's day!

I've learned that it's the connections and the commitments that make the Friends such a great organization. Many of the Friends live out of state so it was a delight to meet Cherri Disque from Colorado for the first time. She has been a member since 2004 and is now the chair of the Board of Advisors for UGAs Franklin College of Arts & Sciences. While email is great I truly valued the time we had talking together face-to-face. Thanks Cherri!

Last, but not least by any means, I thank the Executive Committee of Scott Messer, Linda Bachman and Bill Miller for their time, energy and guidance.

I pledge to do a better job communicating with you all in 2008 and as always I look forward to hearing from you.

My best,  
Beth Richardson  
beth@plantbio.uga.edu



*Greenhouse meeting gang (l-r) Bill Miller, Mike Starr, Jon Garbisch, Susan Starr, Ricky Sweat, Nancy Beckemeyer, Stone Workman, Mitsy Lister, Jim Smith, Linda Bachman and Scott Messer.*

*Photo by Beth Richardson*



# DOING GOOD WORK!

## The 2007 Friends Graduate Student Research Awards presented to Deniz Altin and Hongyu Guo



Our goal to support graduate student research was realized in 2007. It was the inaugural year for the Friends of the Marine Institute Graduate Student Research Award. The purpose of the award is to provide financial assistance to outstanding graduate students conducting research projects at the Marine Institute.

It gives me great pleasure to announce that we presented two \$1000 awards in 2007. The first award was presented to Deniz Altin from the Department of Geology at the University of Georgia (Dr. Susan T. Goldstein's lab) and the second award went to Honggyu Guo, Department of Biology and Biochemistry at the University of Houston (Dr. Steven C. Pennings' lab).

Deniz's proposal was titled *The Application of the Total Evidence*

*Phylogenetic Approach for Phylogenetic Reconstruction of Selected Allogromiid Foraminifera of Sapelo Island, Georgia, USA.* "My research centers on examining the cellular ultrastructure and phylogenetic relationships of a select group of allogromid Foraminifera that are conspicuously found along Sapelo Island salt marshes and tidal inlets" stated Deniz. She added "I am most grateful for the financial support of the Friends of the UGA Marine Institute to assist my research efforts at Sapelo Island, Georgia. Sapelo Island is one of Georgia's most valued historical treasures. It is my pleasure to study the modern Foraminifera of such a pristine environment and I am truly thankful that the Friends of UGA-MI financially support my research endeavors."

Hongyu's proposal was titled *Relationship between Plant Species Richness and Productivity in Georgia Tidal Marshes.* "My research addresses two related issues. First, I am documenting the shape of the productivity-diversity relationship for coastal Georgia marshes, and exploring how this relationship changes among estuaries and among salinity zones. Second, I am conducting transplant experiments to experimentally determine the factors that constrain different plant species to different salinity regions of the estuary. Understanding these two related questions will provide a mechanistic understanding of the way that the diversity-salin-



ity relationship varies in Georgia marshes at different spatial scales. Hongyu said, "I am very happy to know that I received the Friends of UGAMI Award."

A total of five proposals were submitted to The Friends of the Marine Institute Graduate Research Awards for 2007. The proposals were reviewed and ranked by Dr. Bill Miller, Director of the Marine Institute and Dr. Lloyd Dunn, professor emeritus of Botany, Georgia Tech.

The next deadline for proposal submission is June 1, 2008. Please contact Beth Richardson for guidelines <beth@plantbio.uga.edu>. *Thank you to all the Friends for making this award possible and special thanks are extended to Cherri Disque for making an additional gift to the Friends that made a second award possible for 2007. Many thanks to Bill and Lloyd for making the tough decisions. Beth Richardson*

of living on-site is the flexibility of my research and sampling schedule. I can run experiments, take samples, and monitor field sites essentially 24/7. This is optimal for the type of work that I do. I can include all sorts of variations in my sampling regimes such as tides, day or night, rain events, etc. These are much more difficult to plan for and deal with when you are only here for a couple of days or weeks. And it's the first time in my experience that I've been able to go home for lunch!

There are drawbacks. Island life can be isolating both personally and professionally. One has to be very comfortable spending large amounts of time alone with your thoughts, and enjoy communing with nature in place of a lively social or cultural scene that you might experience in a traditional academic setting. In the event of an emergency, the hospital is an hour away, which recently became painfully apparent to my husband when he was bitten by a fire ant and had an unexpected anaphylactic reaction. It was a little scary as we slowly made our way across the sound on a moonless night in a small boat and watched his throat swell.

*Q. While the Friends have been working on cleaning up the greenhouse, you have been coordinating an effort to clean up the scientific display cabinets in the main laboratory and the tennis courts. We applaud your hard work and all the volunteers that helped make that possible. Tell us about these projects and other on-island projects where you and your husband, Pete Krull, have volunteered your time and energy. It really is making such a wonderful difference.*

A. In the summer of 2006, I coordinated two undergraduate interns to do a mock up of a new theme-based

display in the main lab building. This area serves as the public face of the research lab at UGAMI and needs serious updating. The two interns did a great job of completing the mock up. I had hoped that we would have a second pair of interns in the summer of 2007 to take the mock up and make a permanent display. However, funds were not available to support interns or buy the needed materials. I would love to work with Friends to make this a goal of 2008.

The tennis court is a pet project of my husband and I, and we've had significant support from



several folks at UGAMI including faculty alumnus and tennis buff, Steve Newell. Our modest goal is to get the tennis court in playable condition and maintain the plant growth around the perimeter. We plan to be finished with this project by 2008.

*Q. If you had one wish for the MI what would it be?*

A. I would like for the State of Georgia, the University System and UGA to truly recognize what they have in this gem, and to polish it and place it in their crown. UGAMI

is indispensable to students and faculty around and outside the state for its access to the ecosystem. I daresay the "cool" factor for this marine lab location is likely second to none in the southeast. Students and researchers relish their time here. UGAMI's location within a National Estuarine Research Reserve is unique and valuable for coastal science research and education, particularly during this period of exponential growth in Georgia's coastal population.

However, UGAMI has the potential to offer much more to the State and UGA than access to an amazing ecosystem. This Institution has enjoyed a prestigious reputation in the past. And although diminishing funds and other priorities have resulted in a decline in UGAMI's research contributions, its prestige lives on. Prestige is very difficult to develop, and an invaluable intangible. The time has come to revive UGAMI's prestigious research reputation, and perhaps link this to specific programs on campus. The University will attract more students and better students, more faculty and better faculty, and ultimately more money from granting agencies and donors.

*Q. What do you feel is UGAMI's biggest challenge outside of financial considerations?*

A. Dispelling the reputation of deterioration. Considerable effort has been made over the past three years to shore up programs for visitors to the island. And I hope this effort is soon going to turn to shoring up research programs at UGAMI. Each one of us needs to broadcast a clear message of rejuvenation NOT deterioration about UGAMI when we talk to our friends and colleagues.



# Welcoming New Members & Applauding Life Members\*

Frank & Joann Luecke\*  
Chris Beam  
Steve & Kitty Henderson  
Bill & Leslie Hodges  
Lorene T. Howard  
Carolyn & Jeffery Rader  
Joanne Sharpe  
Jerry & Nora Sue Spencer  
Tom Woodruff & Doc Epstein

## & Special Thanks to Members for Their Continued Support

Jane Scott Boyd  
Cherri Disque\*  
Michael Griffin & Erisa Ndidi Ojimba  
James & Brenda Kitchens  
Liz McGhee  
Mark & Daphne Murphy - In honor of James W. Porter  
\*Life Members have donated \$10,000 or more



*Josh, Bill and Mac Hodges put sweat equity into the Greenhouse Project.*



*Joann (l) & Frank Luecke (r) and their staff worked on the powerstation & the greenhouse.*



*Nora Sue & Jerry Spencer visited the Marine Institute and the Greenhouse Project in October. Jerry helped restore the fountain on the square in Brunswick, GA and he has ideas on how to get the MI's turkey fountain back in working order.*



## VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR - NANCY S. BECKEMEYER!



No one has worked harder and recruited more people to be involved with the Friends than Nancy Beckemeyer. She is a UGA graduate in Landscape Architecture and CEO of two companies, Penfield House & Gardens B&B and Autumn Ridge Landscape & Architectural Firm.

Since joining the Friends a year ago she has participated in and lead numerous greenhouse project work weekends. With her business trailer she's picked up and hauled donated furniture to Sapelo, chipped mountains of brush, scrubbed toilets, and vacuumed every square inch of the apts and new dorm. Everyone who has had the pleasure of spending time with Nancy loves her sense of humor and admires her dedication to Sapelo Island. Her grandfather was the agricultural manager for Howard E. Coffin (her Sapelo connection and family story will appear in the next newsletter). Nancy nominated the greenhouse project for the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation's *Places in Peril* and the project made the list for 2008! Also high on her list of projects is properly mothballing the old Administration Building (old dorm). This project also made the *Places in Peril* list and was nominated by retired DNR Historic Perservationist Ken Thomas.

Preparing shrimp dinners (esp. low country boils), sippin' gin & tonics and sharing lots of ideas and laughter make you want to spend more time on-island with Nancy. She says "find me a husband with a big...pension...and we'll get this greenhouse project done."  
Thanks surfer girl for all your hours of hard work and devotion!

What a difference you've made, Nancy!



*Nancy (l) recruited her former landscape student Chris Beam to work on the Greenhouse Project. Chris is an amazingly hard worker.*





LEFT, THIS SCIENTIST CAN COOK TOO—DR. VERNON J. HENRY PREPARES HIS 'SAPELO PEPPER SHRIMP' Right, Mrs. Henry Serves Crab Gumbo to Guest, H. P. Mefford—Whole Crab Is Feature of This Dish

Staff Photos—Marion Crowe

## Director of Sapelo Marine Institute Proves He Is a Seafood Chef, Too

Here are some of the recipes prepared from food from the island.

### SAPELO PEPPER-SHRIMP

2 sticks margarine or butter  
3 level tablespoons black pepper  
2 lbs. headed shrimp  
Melt margarine in electric skillet at 300 degrees F. or in spider (medium heat). Stir in pepper. Add unshelled shrimp. Stir until shrimp are well coated. Cover and let simmer for 10-12 minutes. Good for hors d'oeuvres. Serves four generously.

### CRAB GUMBO

½ cup bacon drippings  
¾ cup flour  
1 large onion grated  
1 bell pepper chopped  
2 pods chopped garlic  
3 stalks celery chopped  
1 small can tomatoes  
2 quarts water  
Dash of parsley flakes  
½ teaspoon thyme  
2 bay leaves  
½ cup chives

Brown flour in bacon drippings until grease and flour separate. Sauté onion, green pepper, garlic, and celery in the brown roux. Add remaining ingredients. Simmer for two hours. Thirty minutes before serving add cleaned crabs. Serve over hot rice.

Photos and recipes from an Atlanta Constitution article about Jim & Judy Henry.

Right, a photo of the former schoolroom - now the main office. Bottom right photograph shows Carolyn and her brother Jeff in the greenhouse. The plants belonged to Dr. Milton "Sam" Gray.

Hot pepper sauce and filet may be added to each individual's taste.

### SCALLOPED OYSTERS

1 pint oysters  
½ cup bread crumbs  
1 cup cracker crumbs  
½ cup melted butter  
Salt  
Pepper  
4 tablespoons oyster liquid  
2 tablespoons milk or cream

Mix bread and cracker crumbs and stir in butter. Put a thin layer in bottom of shallow, buttered baking dish. Cover with oysters and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Add 2 tablespoons oyster liquid and 1 tablespoon milk or cream. Repeat, top with remaining crumbs.

Bake 30 min. at 450 degrees F. Serves four. Important to have only 2 layers of oysters. For a pleasant subtle flavor, sprinkle each layer with a few gratings of nutmeg.



## The MI in the 60s! Contributions from Carolyn Henry Rader

"Growing up on Sapelo, I never had a bad day! I feel fortunate to know the island from a child's perspective, seeing it as a magical place rich with possibility and the excitement of discovery. It still holds those special qualities for each of us", stated Carolyn. She has saved these treasures and many more over the years. Her father, Dr. Jim Henry (pictured cooking shrimp), now lives on Little Cumberland Island and Carolyn lives in Decatur, GA. Thanks for sharing!



## The new dormitory is open!

The ribbon cutting ceremony for the dedication of the new dormitory was held on May 7, 2007. It was a warm, windy day with a bright blue sky. Dignitaries and guests arrived from the UGA main campus in Athens, Washington, DC, and McIntosh County.

The ceremony began with uplifting speeches by UGA President Michael Adams, Congressman Jack Kingston, MI Director Bill Miller, graduate student Kate Segarra, and NOAA Director of Communications George Cathcart. After the ribbon was cut everyone enjoyed a fine feast prepared by George and Lula Walker.

We thank Congressman Kingston for taking the time to visit the Greenhouse Project and make a few phone calls on our behalf!



*Sissors ready - Congressman Jack Kingston, Dean Garnett S. Stokes, VP for Research David Lee, UGA President Michael Adams, NOAA Dir. Comm. George Cathcart, MI Director Bill Miller and graduate student Kate Segarra cut the ribbon to open the new dormitory.*

## and the Power Station is ready for renovation!



*Taking a call and riding one of the engines out of the Power Station. All the engines have gone to museums. More info on this renovation will be in the next issue of the newsletter.*

### Melissa Booth interview continued from page 4

*Q. What would you do today if you were Director for a Day?*

A. Assuming that I wouldn't have access to millions of dollars to renovate the lab, hire a few faculty and replace the trailers with little cabins, I would work on a more professional public face for UGAMI. I would commission a new website with an extensive data portal, as well as commission a new icon and promotional materials. If possible, I would lobby for more IT support here.

*Q. What would you like to see the Friends of UGAMI work on?*

A. The Teal boardwalk needs renovation, and it's exactly the type of project a Friends group could do that would directly help UGAMI. I would like to work with the Friends on the displays in the main lab building.

*Thank you Melissa for explaining to us about your work at the MI and sharing stories about life on Sapelo Island. Please don't hesitate to ask the Friends for support for projects at the MI. A one-page proposal and an estimate of the cost is all we need.*



## Jon's Wish List



Hello All,  
Beth, has asked again for a list of things I might wish for, items that could be donated to the Marine Institute in usable or repairable condition. We have been working on collecting a fleet of golf carts, mostly **Club Cars**, but also 2 **EZ-Go**, and a **Kawasaki Mule**. Anyone that has a gas powered Club Car in ANY condition (they are very rebuildable) should think about donating it to us. I would really like another Kawasaki Mule but they are much harder to come by. Great thing about the golf cart / utility vehicles is they are low cost all around, they are easy to fix, and they are NOT a state vehicle so there are no issues letting guests drive them around the island. The utility vehicles we have seem to see very steady use too. For a full scale vehicle I could really use an older **Chevy Suburban** (1990-ish), thinking that at \$3 a gallon for gas ...people would be ready to give them up. So I thought it best to focus on one thing but it never hurts to ask - visitors use a wide range of equipment and have a wide range of needs so if you think we might be able to use something please ask. Special thanks to Eugene & Charlsie Keferl from Brunswick for donating an outboard motor. Many thanks,  
Jon

**Jon O. Garbisch, Program Coordinator I - School of Marine Programs Liaison**  
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Phone - 912-485-2125

## FRIENDS MEMBERSHIP FORM - JOIN TODAY!

Yes! I want to join the Friends of the University of Georgia Marine Institute!

☐ \$25 Students    ☐ \$50 Regular    ☐ \$100 Sustaining    ☐ \$250 Patron  
☐ \$500 Donor    ☐ Other    ☐ \$Million (Sand) Dollar Club

Make your check payable to: Arch Foundation - Friends of the Marine Institute Fund

And mail your tax-deductible donation to:

Friends of the UGA Marine Institute

Marine Programs, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602

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or join and donate online: [www.friendsofugami.org](http://www.friendsofugami.org)

In addition to your membership please consider making an additional donation to our project fund.

Our 2008 project list includes:

- 1) Graduate Student Awards.
- 2) The Greenhouse Project - complete restoration of Howard Coffin's 1925 Wm. H. Lutton designed greenhouse.
- 3) Repairing the Teal Boardwalk.
- 4) Funding Summer Interns.
- 5) Mothballing the old dorm.
- 6) A guidebook to the Vegetation of the Georgia Barrier Islands.
- 7) Restoration of the Turkey Fountain.
- 8) Update the main laboratory bldg.



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