



Fall 2006

"News, research updates, and information on lobsters and the lobster industry."

Published by the Lobster Institute

"Protecting and conserving the lobster resource, and enhancing lobstering as an industry...and a way of life."

LOBSTER INSTITUTE C.O.R.E. CAMPAIGN RECEIVES \$100,000 RIVERDALE CHALLENGE

The Lobster Institute has received a leadership challenge gift from Riverdale Mills, Inc. of Northbridge, Massachusetts, as part of its C.O.R.E. Campaign. The challenge is for the Institute to raise \$100,000, which Riverdale Mills will then match with its contribution of \$100,000. Riverdale Mills is the leading supplier of coated wire used in making lobster traps, among other applications. According to James Knott, founder and

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Maine Aquatic Animal Health Laboratory to be Outfitted with State-of-the-Art Equipment

The Lobster Institute recently coordinated the submission of a successful grant proposal to the State of Maine's newly created Marine Research Fund to help equip the Maine Aquatic Animal Health Laboratory (MAAHL) at the University of Maine. The grant, administered by the Maine Technology Institute, will make \$395,000 available to the MAAHL. The equipment to be purchased will greatly increase the lab's capabilities to serve as an essential resource to facilitate needed disease assessments and outbreak investigations in a timely and exemplary manner. Several instruments to be purchased are not currently available in any Maine marine research laboratories. One such example is a Biolog Microbial Identification System. While well-established systems exist for human clinical bacteria such as API systems, Vitec et cetera, these can only be used as initial tools, and fall short when identifying environmental and marine bacteria. Acquiring a bacterial identification system such as the Biolog will allow for database building and consistent identification of microbial assemblages of marine aquatic animals.

-- cont. in Research Report

A continuing "did you know" series featuring historical highlights of Lobster Institute research and accomplishments.



A Region-Wide Organization

Did you know that the Lobster Institute is a region-wide organization...serving the lobster industry from Long Island Sound through Newfoundland? The Institute is the only industry-wide organization of its kind – one that brings together fishermen and other members of the industry, scientists, resource managers and community members to share information, discuss issues, and define research priorities. Collaboration has been a hallmark of the Lobster Institute since its inception. The Institute provides a means for all interested parties to work together toward a common goal, and links industry expertise with academic resources to solve problems and face challenges together. Its Board of Advisors is comprised of over 24 members of the industry and coastal communities from throughout New England and the Canadian Maritimes.

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A member of the University of Maine System

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Riverdale Challenge

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James M. Knott, Sr., founder of Riverdale Mills. Knott and his family have issued the Riverdale Challenge, and will contribute \$100,000 to the Lobster Institute once an additional \$100,000 is raised.

(photo courtesy of Janet Knott.)

have always been responsive to the needs of the lobster industry... providing technical assistance for day-to-day operations as well as the scientific research needed to help secure the resource for the future. That is why Riverdale Mills and the Knott family are supporting the Lobster Institute's C.O.R.E. Campaign with this challenge gift."

"To-date, the Institute has relied on grants and other catch-can funding sources," says Dr. Bob Bayer, Executive Director of the Lobster Institute.

"This means we have to conduct our research in fits and starts, as well as scramble for adequate operating expenses. That must change, and that is why we have started our C.O.R.E. Campaign. Jim is an active member of our Campaign Advisory Committee, and has truly taken a leadership role in every way. This gift from the Knotts – the Riverdale Challenge – is a great start to the Pacesetter Phase of our Campaign."

The \$4.8 million C.O.R.E. Campaign is being launched so that the Institute can have a full-time director/lobster researcher; employ two additional scientists, in the areas of lobster health and value-added product development; and secure its operations for the future. These dedicated resources will address ongoing research needs and expand the depth and breadth of the Institute's research as well as its industry outreach and educational programs.

"We know that challenge gifts do work as a great tool to leverage additional gifts," added Bayer. "Riverdale Mills also contributed \$10,000 as the first gift to the seed fund to initiate the C.O.R.E. Campaign. Jim and his fellow campaign committee members and several Maine coastal community banks raised the first \$150,000 to get the campaign started. This first \$150,000 triggered a matching gift of \$75,000 from the Darden Restaurants Foundation who had issued a 2:1 challenge pledge to the campaign."

The mission of the Lobster Institute is to conduct and provide research to protect, conserve, and enhance the

CEO of the company, "I've been hauling lobster traps since the 1940s, and still hold a lobster license to this day. I've been a supporter of the Lobster Institute from day one. Like Riverdale Mills, the Lobster Institute takes an innovative and pro-active approach to doing business. They

vitality of the lobster resource and the lobster fishing ...both as an industry and as a way of life. The Institute conducts applied research and develops products and processes to meet the needs and challenges of the lobster industry. Founded by industry members in 1987, the Institute is part of the University of Maine's research and public outreach program and is a collaborative effort between the University of Maine and the worldwide lobster industry.

Anyone interested learning more about the Lobster Institute and in making a contribution to help meet the Riverdale Challenge can contact Cathy Billings, Assistant Director of the Lobster Institute, at 207-581-2751 or visit www.lobsterinstitute.org.

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Spotlight on the Institute A Region-Wide Organization

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Below is a list of members of the 2006-2007 Lobster Institute Board of Advisors:

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**Check out the Lobster Institute website at
www.lobsterinstitute.org,
providing the definitive site for lobster
information with nearly 200 links.**





Contact us at 207-581-2751 if you would like to sponsor our "Research Report" and see your logo here!

RESEARCH REPORT

Readers may contact the Lobster Institute for more detailed information on any of these projects.

❖ **Equipping the Maine Aquatic Animal Health Laboratory -- cont. from page 1**

This will be key to lobster and mollusc diagnostics and health assessments. Plans call for the Biolog to also be made available for outside sample submissions once proper protocols and guidelines are established. The database that will be established through use of the Biolog can be shared with other private and government aquatic animal diagnostic laboratories, providing a vital tool for bacterial identification. The Marine Research Fund grant will also facilitate the establishment of a state-of-the-art marine samples repository. A high capacity -80C freezer unit and an Aspen Laboratory Information Management System will be acquired as the centerpieces for the repository. Currently in Maine (and likely in New England) there is no available repository for long-term storage of marine samples/specimens, with no cryogenic freezer capacity anywhere in the State. Providing long-term storage of and access to various marine tissue, water, sediment, and other environmental samples, and related research data, will allow for comparative studies over time and following the occurrence of environmental impact events i.e. oil spills, unregulated effluent discharge, contaminant run-off, etc. It will also provide historically supported scientific data, which is critical for informed ecosystem management.

With a fully equipped lab, the MAAHL will be better able to support marine animal health research, and foster entrepreneurial activity and technology transfer. The MAAHL is already working cooperatively with the Lobster Institute on shell disease research and other projects. Collaborations are also being developed and with aquatic producers, processors and harvesters, marine science specialists, Extension educators, and a host of marine and aquaculture related organizations.

For more information contact MAAHL Manager Deborah Bouchard at 207-581- 2767.

❖ **Immunological Response of Lobster Hemolymph to be Studied --** With a grant from the Maine Lobster Research, Education, and Development Fund, Dr. L. Brian Perkins of the University of Maine's Chemical Food Science Laboratory will

explore the potential of using lobster hemolymph in commercial immunoassay development. The equivalent of human blood, hemolymph is estimated to comprise 20% of a lobster's body weight. Hemolymph contains hemocyanin, a large protein dissolved in plasma fluids. A potent immunogen, hemocyanin has been shown to combine chemically with smaller antigenic molecules that bind specific antibodies produced during immune response in rabbits. Keyhole limpet hemocyanin (KLH) is a preferred element in production of assays for human applications. Preliminary studies indicate that lobster hemocyanin (LBH) elicits a stronger immunological response than KLH as measured by argon laser detection of antibodies labeled with Fluorescein Isothiocyanate. Perkins theorizes that LBH can be substituted for KLH in commercial immunoassay development and antibody production, yielding more sensitive diagnostic tests that produce consistent and accurate results using current laboratory protocols.

❖ **The New England Lobster Research Initiative Announces 2006 Grant Funded Projects --**

Earlier this year, the U.S. Congress appropriated \$3 million to establish a cooperative research program, the New England Lobster Research Initiative (NELRI), to study the causes and consequences of lobster shell disease. This funding is jointly managed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries Service), the University of Rhode Island (URI), and Rhode Island Sea Grant. The goal of this project is to describe the disease agent and how it works, and to determine the extent and severity of the disease in New England waters. The NELRI issued an RFP in May and received 25 proposals, which were given extensive external scientific peer review, with guidance on final funding decisions made by an external, ad hoc scientific review panel. Nine proposals received funding for a total of \$1.9 million. For a description of each of the proposals visit http://seagrant.gso.uri.edu/fisheries/lobster_initiative/index.html#Proposals .

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LOBSTER INSTITUTE

Lobster Bulletin, Fall 2006

Lobster Institute To Celebrate 20th Anniversary

The year 2007 will mark the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Lobster Institute. Originally known as The Maine Lobster Institute, the organization was established in 1987 as the result of the united efforts of representatives from the Maine Lobstermen's Association, the Maine Lobster Pound Association, the Maine Import/Export Lobster Dealers and the University of Maine. Its initial charge was to *"conduct research and provide information to protect, conserve, and enhance the Maine lobster resource and its environment in order to insure the continuance of a viable lobster industry that will benefit Maine people."*

Almost from its inception the founders looked to expand the Institute's reach. They realized a unified approach (geographically and between sectors) would be most effective in dealing with the challenges faced by the lobster industry. The Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association became actively involved in the early stages of the Institute's development. With an increasing regional focus, the organization was renamed simply the Lobster Institute, and today boasts a Board of Advisors with representatives from lobster industry associations, businesses and communities ranging from New York through the Canadian Maritime Provinces. Today, the Institute's mission reflects its comprehensive reach and influence. It reads, *"The Lobster Institute, with guidance and involvement from fishermen and all constituents within the lobster industry, and with both a community and global perspective, conducts and provides for research and educational outreach focused on protecting, conserving, and enhancing the lobster resource and lobstering as an industry...and as a way of life."*

The Institute will be celebrating throughout the coming year, and is currently working on a yearlong

schedule of events and special projects. Look for special mailings, and information in upcoming *Lobster Bulletins* as well as on the Web at www.lobsterinstitute.org. ❧

New Charitable Giving Incentives for Transfer of IRA Assets

For at least the next two years, federal legislation has been passed that will permit donors to avoid the tax suffering that can occur from using IRA distributions to make charitable gifts. The **Pension Protection Act of 2006**, signed into law by President George W. Bush on August 17, will permit individuals to instruct their IRA plan administrators to transfer IRA assets directly to qualified charities, like the Lobster Institute. Contributing through a transfer of IRA assets is not for everyone. While direct transfers from one's IRA to charities are not tax deductible under this new law, there are direct benefits if you have already given at your 50%-of-adjusted gross income deduction limit; you do not itemize deductions at all; additional income will cause more of your Social Security to be taxed; or you reside in states that either do not allow charitable deductions for state income tax purposes or you do not have a state income tax at all. Other guidelines also apply: individuals must have attained at least the age of 70 ½ on the date of distribution, the IRA distribution must go directly to the charitable organization, up to \$100,000 in 2006 and again in 2007 may be distributed to charities from IRAs and be excluded from gross income, and distributions may be applied in satisfaction of the donor's required minimum distribution. You are encouraged to bring this law to the attention of your tax advisor and discuss whether it might be of benefit to you. ❧