

Photo collage by Loriann Coody



Caption for page 3: Top row l to r—NYSG Leigh Hubbard, Phil Curcio (holding proc. from NYS Senator Zeldin), PAC member Roger Tollefson, NY Fishing Tackle Trade Assoc. John Mantione, former NYSG dir. Dr. Jack Mattice; Scholar Liz Suter (SBU), researcher Dr. Paul Bowser (Cornell). Middle row: Judy White, BOG member Mike White, former NYSG scholar and asst dir. Bill Wise; researcher Dr. Chris Gobler (SBU), Tollefson; PAC member Aida Reyes-Kuehn, NYSG Barbara Branca, former scholar and researcher Gregg Rivara (above). Bottom row: NYSG Lane Smith; NYSG Coastal Processes Spec. Jay Tanski (pointing); Assemblyman Fred Thiele, NYSG Dir Dr. Jim Ammerman, Assemblyman Bob Sweeney; NYSG Asst. Dir. Cornelia Schlenk, researcher Dr. Malcolm Bowman (SBU).

Celebrating at the Maritime Museum

At the Long Island Maritime Museum celebration on Great South Bay in September 2011, about 100 people were welcomed by NYSG Director **Dr. Jim Ammerman**. “We are here with you, our stakeholders and supporters, to celebrate the first 40 today. It’s great to be on the South Shore where much of our important research and extension outreach activities have taken place over the past 40 years.” On hand were partners, advisors, business owners, researchers, graduate students, educators and Sea Grant staff. All enjoyed the sunshine, refreshments and music after two tropical storms had torn through much of New York just days before.

Cornelia Schlenk, NYSG Assistant Director, explained how “The program itself, as well as the researchers that we fund, have been responsive and visionary and have done a lot of good in addressing the coastal problems and opportunities for NY, both in the marine district and in the Great Lakes. Our contributions to science, both in terms of information and people, I think, have been pretty phenomenal.” She spoke of NYSG’s responsive research on brown tide, lobsters, and hard clams in Long Island waters and Great Lakes’ issues of invasive species, food web changes and the cause of Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia in fish. Earlier in the day, **Dr. Paul Bowser** of Cornell had given an anniversary lecture about that fish disease at Stony Brook University. Bowser was in attendance along with **Drs. Anne McElroy** and **Jack Mattice**, both former NYSG directors mentioned in Ms. Schlenk’s brief history of the program.

Dr. Kathy Bunting-Howarth, NYSG’s Associate Director said, “Whether you’re a government official or a recreational fisherman or whether you’re just trying to take your family to the beach and can’t decide which one to go to, New York Sea Grant can work with you, getting the right information from the source and out to the folks along NY’s coastlines.”

Special guests were **NYS Assemblymen Robert Sweeney** (D-Lindenhurst, Chairman of the State Assembly’s Environmental Conservation Committee) and **Fred Thiele, Jr.** (I-Sag Harbor). Said Assemblyman Sweeney, “We’ve had the opportunity to have a relationship with Sea Grant over the years and we benefited from that—the good work that you have done and continue to do.” Upon saying, “Congratulations on 40 years of bringing science to the shore,” he and Assemblyman Thiele presented director Ammerman with a proclamation signed by the entire Suffolk County delegation. In addition, **Phil Curcio**, representing **State Senator Lee Zeldin**, presented a congratulatory proclamation from the NYS Senate.

Said Assemblyman Thiele, “Without the resources from Sea Grant, and the work they have done to help our local government, our baymen and our local residents—their way of life—would be more in jeopardy.”

George Wallace, Suffolk County’s first Poet Laureate demonstrated the relevance of famed poet Walt Whitman by reciting Whitman’s “Poems of Joy” about life along the sea. Said Wallace, poet-in-residence at the Walt Whitman Birthplace, “A mid-19th century Long Island native, Whitman had intimate knowledge of working people like fishermen. He gives voice to them so beautifully.”

With a local poet, donations of local wine and seafood, a jazz trio comprised of Stony Brook University music students, and a Sea Grant staffer singing an apt variation on a classic “Beyond Sea Grant,” the message of the day was an upbeat future of sustainability for our coastal resources. Said Dr. Ammerman, “This is our 40th anniversary. And while we are looking back, we are really looking forward to the next 40 years.”

—Barbara A. Branca