



Information: Jim Graves, (949) 719-0588

Ocean Institute Celebrates “Festival of Whales” with Noted Speakers, Exhibits, Living History Presentations

February 4, 2008, DANA POINT, Calif. – The Ocean Institute will join in the City of Dana Point’s annual Festival of Whales celebration (see www.festivalofwhales.org) the weekends of March 1 & 2 and 8 & 9 with presentations by noted experts on whales, hands-on exhibits and exciting Living History re-enactments.

Speakers:

On March 1 & 8, 12:30 p.m., Captain Mike Bursk of the Ocean Institute’s *RV Sea Explorer* will share his special knowledge of the gray whale gathered in part during his study of gray whales off the coast of Baja California.

On March 2 & 9, 12:30 p.m., Doug Thompson, accomplished author, naturalist, filmmaker, and photo-journalist will present *Whales: Touching the Mystery*. Thompson will share his 30 years of experience studying the gray whales of San Ignacio Lagoon in Baja, Mexico.

Exhibits

On both weekends, the Institute’s learning labs will focus on new discoveries in marine mammal research and allow visitors to explore a variety of fascinating phenomena unique to the whale. Visitors, for example, can listen to underwater whale sounds; children can enjoy hands-on activities, including arts & crafts.

Living History Presentations

The weekend will also include Living History presentations of life onboard whaling ships of the 19th century. On each day of the festival, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., the Institute will present *Thar She Blows!*, living history demonstrations and activities that offer visitors a glimpse into life at sea during the early whaling days.

All events are free with paid admission to the Ocean Institute. Admission is free to members of the Institute. For an additional charge, the Institute offers Marine Mammal Exploration Cruises that go in search of the migrating gray whale. During the two weekends

of the festival the Institute's hours will be 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. For information, visit www.ocean-institute.org or call (949) 496-2274.

Founded in 1977, the Ocean Institute is a non-profit organization dedicated to ocean preservation through education, setting the standard for educational excellence and serving as a leading resource for universities, museums, teachers and all others seeking to increase their knowledge of the ocean. The Ocean Institute is open to the general public on weekends, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Cost: \$6.00 adults, \$4.00 children (ages 4-12), Ocean Institute members free. Unique maritime and ocean-themed items are available in the Chambers Gallery everyday, 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. Institute address: 24200 Dana Point Harbor Dr., Dana Point. Website: www.ocean-institute.org. Phone: (949) 496-2274.

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