



NEWS RELEASE:

National Marine Life Center Announces 5th Annual Mermaid Ball

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(BUZZARDS BAY, MA) March 27, 2012 - The National Marine Life Center (NMLC) in Buzzards Bay is proud to announce the return of their popular Mermaid Ball for its fifth incarnation on Saturday, August 25, 2012 at Willowbend Country Club in Mashpee. This joyful costume ball is the National Marine Life Center's signature fundraising event that benefits the center's rehabilitation, science, and education programs and raises critical funds to help complete the center's new marine animal hospital and rehabilitation facility in downtown Buzzards Bay.

The Mermaid Ball is always a fun-filled evening including a reception, live and silent auctions, dinner, and live music by the GinaMark band, with mermaids, pirates, sea creatures, and some special surprises! Patrons are encouraged to attend in costume or creative black tie. Tickets to the ball include hors d'oeuvres, gourmet dinner, live entertainment, and a limited edition Pairpoint suncatcher created exclusively for the event. Space is limited and the event tends to sell out early. Tickets are \$100 each if purchased before June 25th, and \$125 each if purchased after June 25th. If you are not able attend but would like to support the National Marine Life Center, you may make a contribution online, or by visiting the center. Become a "Steward of the Seas" for a guaranteed "whale of a time!" Tickets may be purchased online at mermaidball.com, by calling NMLC at 508-743-9888, or by visiting the center at 120 Main St., Buzzards Bay.

About the National Marine Life Center - The National Marine Life Center is an independent, non-profit 501(c)(3) rehabilitation and release hospital for the treatment of stranded sea turtles and seals, with future plans to expand to treat dolphins, porpoises, and small whales. Their emphasis is to educate the public about the needs and status of these important animals and their environment, and to research their health needs and threats in captivity and in the wild.

The Cape Cod area is a hotspot for strandings, with hundreds of animals requiring medical and rehabilitative care every year. "Currently there are no rehabilitative facilities in New England that are capable of holding and treating a cetacean larger than a harbor porpoise," says Kate Shaffer, the center's Animal Care Coordinator. "Furthermore, the nearest seal rehabilitation facilities are located in Maine and Connecticut and there often isn't enough space to accommodate Massachusetts' animals." The National Marine Life Center is stepping up to meet this need and is building a state of the art marine animal hospital to treat larger animals that strand in distress in large numbers on the Cape. Since its inception in 2004, the Center has rescued, treated, and rehabilitated dozens of endangered turtles including Kemps Ridley sea turtles, Loggerhead sea turtles, Diamondback Terrapins, and Red Bellied Cooters.

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