### **City Employees Club of Los Angeles**

# Sgts. From **Port Police** Save Jumper

Sgts. Cobos and Ferrara save a jumper on the Vincent Thomas Bridge.

### Story and photo courtesy Harbor

HARBOR - Two Port Police Sergeants rushed to the aid of man in apparent duress and, by grabbing him by the pant leg, prevented him from jumping off the Vincent Thomas Bridge.

Their heroism took place Oct. 28. The man was uninjured and was taken to a

local hospital for observation. Both officers have been commended by the

Port Police Dept. for their act of courage in the line of duty without regard to their own personal safety.

Alive! congratulates Sgts. Cobos and Ferrara for their bravery in saving a life.

> For more information, see the story on page 21.



From left: Sgt. Rosario Ferrara and Sgt. Daniel Cobos. The Vincent Thomas Bridge is in the background.

# **Black** Association Honors 6 Who **Blazed Trails**

Black Personnel Assn. honors six City Employees during African American Heritage Month.

Story by Yvonne Liu, Finance

LAABP -



Six exceptional City Employees were honored Feb. 18 for being Trailblazers and providing clear leadership for others to follow. They were honored by the Los Angeles Association of Black Personnel (LAABP).

This year's honorees were Detrich Brown Allen, General Manager, Environmental Affairs; Cheryl Chisolm, Senior Electrical Inspector, Building and Safety; Michael Holmes, Lot Cleaning Superintendent, Public Works/Street Services; Miriam Scott Long, Deputy Mayor overseeing youth and education; Rashad Mfume, Senior Systems Analyst, ITA; and Jeffery Whitmore, Revenue Manager, Finance. Congratulations to the honorees, and to the

LAABP for another successful reception.

See all the details on page 58.

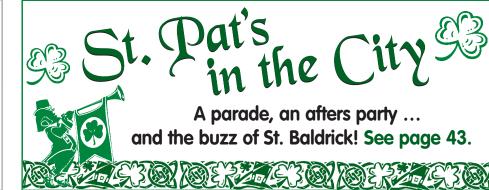


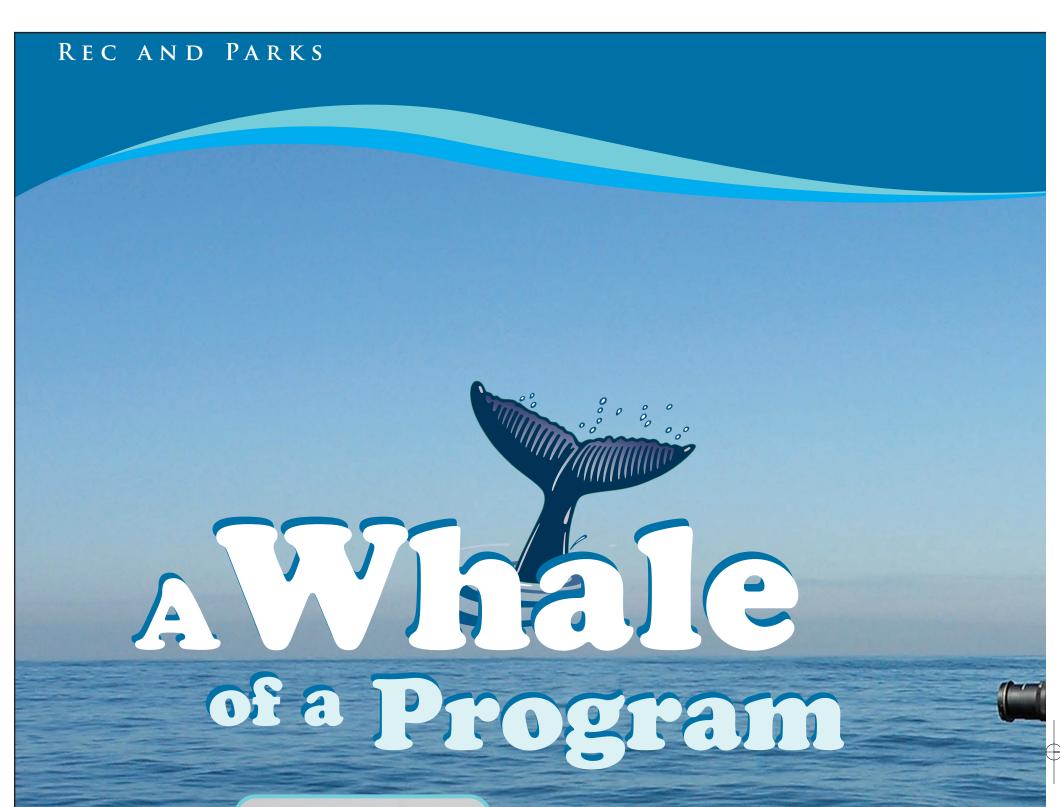


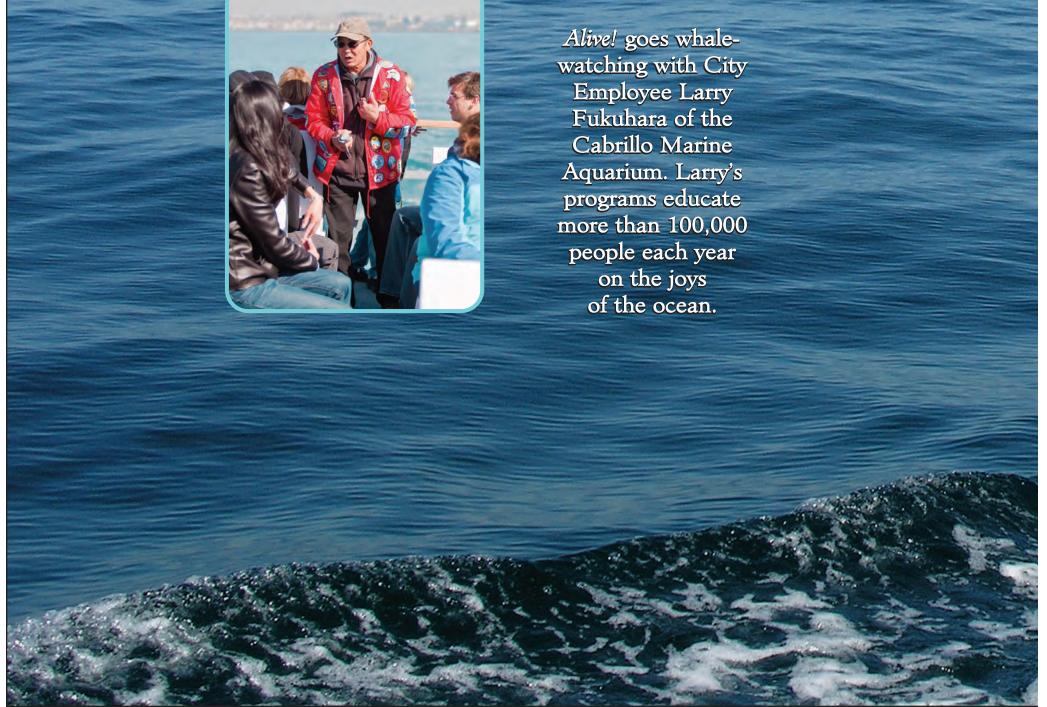
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# Bringing L.A.



On Feb. 11, Club CEO John Hawkins and Alive! editor John Burnes went on a whale-watch excursion with Cabrillo Marine Aquarium Program Director Larry Fukuhara, and then interviewed him about his educational programs. Last year, more than 235,000 people visited the aquarium, and more than 108,000 experienced one of his programs.

-Ed.

# Larry Fukuhara helps educate more than 100,000 people each year on the wonders of the Pacific Ocean.

**Alive!:** Thanks for taking us on the boat and pointing out all the great sea life out there, including the three whales.

**Larry Fukuhara:** Sure! It was a great day out there!

# This is your 27th year with the City, is that right?

**Larry:** Yes. In 1981, I started out as a docent, a volunteer here. And then, after I guess maybe six months, they asked me if I wanted to work part-time. I said of course because I didn't really have a job at that time. And then, finally, it took quite a few years until I became a full-timer.

I started out as a volunteer and then I became a part-timer. Then, I remember John Olguin was saying that he was going to retire soon. [John Olguin became

the director of the Cabrillo Marine Museum in 1949 and remains as Director Emeritus. – Ed.] And I said, "When?" He would always say, "Soon." So the following year, he would say, "I'm going to retire soon." I say, "When?" He would say, "Soon." And that kept going. It took him about six years to finally retire but, you know, it worked out. I just hung in there.

### What's your education?

**Larry:** I got my degree in biology at San Diego State, and it just worked out. I enjoy what I'm doing.

# What made you want to do this for a living?

**Larry:** Sometimes you fall into things. When I was going to Long Beach City College, they would ask me, "What's your major?" "I don't know." So I went



to San Diego State. "What's your major?" "I don't know." Finally, they said that I was going to have to tell them my major. So I looked at my transcripts and said, wow, I sure took a lot of biology classes. All right, I think I'll take biology, just to get the degree. I never thought I was going to use it. So I got it.

When I finished, I worked at a family nursery for four years, but it was tough work. Finally I couldn't take it any more, so I just quit, and I was unemployed. Then my brother said that they were looking for volunteers at the aquarium. So I got over to the aquarium and said, wow, this would be neat to get a job here. I called to see if there was a opportunity here to work, but they said no. Then, all of the sudden, I started volunteering. I just fell into it. That's how I came here.

### And you're from Long Beach?

**Larry:** Yes. Born and raised in Long Beach. Now I live here in San Pedro.

# And your entire City career has been here in one place?

**Larry:** Yes. Right here at Cabrillo. Cabrillo is a very special place, and there's so much that we do. This is a family. We all work together, helping each other. Most places, they start at eight and then they quit at five. But you come here at eight, and there are people here already. Come here after five, and there are people who are going to stay. We just do what we have to do here, which is great.



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### **March 2009** 35

# THE ALIVE! INTERVIEW From the top deck of the Voyager, Larry Fukuhara explains to a group of tourists about marine mammal behavior.

### The aquarium's been around here for how long?

Larry: We say we started in 1934. As you came into the area here, you probably saw the bathhouse. That was the original Cabrillo Marine Museum. In 1981, we moved over here, and it must have been about 12 years ago when we changed the name to aquarium. So, believe it or not, next year, 2010, we'll be celebrating our 75th anniversary.

### The Love of the Sea

### What do you love about marine life?

Larry: There are many things. Let's look, first of all, at the whales. A lot of people want to go to Africa, and go on a safari to see wild animals. But people don't realize that right off our coast, in our backyard, we have the largest wild animals in the world. We saw them today; we can get real close and see the whales right off the coast.

different smell, a different feel, inside and outside. It's just great.

Also, when I was a kid, my father would always take me fishing. He loved to fish. I started fishing when I was five years old or even younger. Not that I would always fish; I would play with the fish he would catch and so forth. But to this day, I still love to fish. What's neat working at the aquarium is that I get to be around fish all the time.

We have such a variety of things here at Cabrillo. We're right on the beach itself. We have a sandy beach environment, we have a marsh real close by; we have the tide pools. We have a pier, we have a breakwater, we have an inside harbor and we have the outside beach. We have everything right here.

### Like a 'Calliope' Let's talk about the fun trip this

that's perfect. Today, we got to see three whales, and they were all together.

When you have three, if you noticed, it's just like a calliope, popping up, blowing, popping up, blowing and going down, popping up and blowing ... so it's very, very easy to see. We got to see the flukes ...

### The flukes?

Larry: The tails of the whale, the flukes. That's what they're called.

And then, on the way back, we got to see two different types of dolphins. We got to see the common dolphins and then some Pacific white-sided dolphins ... and we got to see sea lions all over the place and all kinds of marine birds. One thing about the marine birds, if you're in the city, sometimes you see seagulls. Of course, you'll see the pigeons in the parks and stuff like that, but when you start seeing birds in the ocean, most of the time, they're a lot larger. We saw quite a few of the big pelicans. We saw the different types of gulls and birds, which is really neat.

whale swimming. But then again, you can't beat the real life experience, to get out there and see them in the open. When I see that, it's just the neatest feeling in the whole wide world, to see that they're really enjoying it. You hear about boys and girls where they think they've seen it all. They have that attitude that you can't impress them. Well, we impressed them today.

### **Cabrillo's Programs**

Let's talk about the programs. Do you differentiate between programs for students and programs for adults or the general population?

**Larry:** A lot of the things that we do, John Olguin put together originally. We started out with the school programs. Those have basically been going at least the 27 years I've been here - we take kids on free tours through our exhibit hall. We're carrying them on, but we've enhanced them.

Another thing I like about this ocean environment is that, if you wanted to get out into the country - you know, rural areas, it didn't used to take much time at all. Now you've got to drive a lot farther. To me, to get onto the ocean, it's just wide open, you know? It's just like being in the country and it's real, real close, which I like. I really do enjoy that. It's a different type of environment. Land is cool, I really like that, but when you get out on the ocean, all your senses wake up. You're talking about a morning. That was pretty great. We saw a lot of life. Talk about what we saw today.

Larry: Today was a fabulous whalewatch trip. If you can go out see one whale, then you are so fortunate because, the thing is, we have a window of time, maybe two and a half hours. The boat can only go so fast and so far. These whales are moving, right now, either from the north or they're coming up from the south. The idea is to try to intercept them. If you see one whale, We were very fortunate, absolutely.

When the kids are on the boat and they see that first whale or the dolphins, they let out this loud shriek of joy. That must be really great to hear.

Larry: Absolutely. You can Google things. If you want to see a whale, you can pop that up and you can see a

We have other things besides the programs through the exhibit hall. We have outreach. We have three vans that go out to schools or other organizations and, essentially, we take the aquarium to them. We have a whole department that takes care of the onsite education groups. These are fee-based.

– continued



# Bringing L.A. to the Ocean

Larry Fukuhara points out a feature of the sea to tourists.





### – continued

Also, if we have a group that wants to learn a little bit more about something specific, we can take them out to whichever area that they want to learn about, like the tide pools, or the sandy beach. If they wanted to learn about fish, they could do that.

We can customize different programs. We have a different group that does that. In fact, we also do teacher workshops. We do public workshops. We have grunion programs.

# The grunion programs here are really big.

**Larry:** They sure are. We are fortunate about the grunions, which are these fish that are about five to seven inches long. From March to August, they come out of the water right on our beach here and they flop around and lay their eggs in the sand. They come up every two weeks. So we pick one night and then we open the aquarium so that the general public can come down, and we'll show them the We're working toward another festival for Earth Day, which is going to be in April. We organize a beach cleanup first, then we come back here, and all kinds of different organizations teach you how to be green, with the backdrop of the aquarium itself.

And we have our docent programs. The docents are people who come to learn about the ocean and then want to share that knowledge. We have adult docents who are taking schoolkids through the exhibit hall right now, as we speak. We have junior high school program that are going to be starting out in July; we take 60 junior high school boys and girls, train them for a week, and then they give the tour through July to all the boys and girls who come through the exhibit hall.

### You train them to be docents, too.

**Larry:** Right. Then we have a senior high school program, which consists of 60 high school boys and girls. They do the same thing as the junior high school boys and girls, acting as docents, but they work through August. Then we have a new docent program starting in September. Those are just some of the main things.

There are other things. We just finished a public workshop called, "What's the Catch?" We're trying to teach people about some of the fish in the ocean are contaminated with DDT and we try to teach them how to identify them and what to do with them, meaning, release them and so forth. We just finished that one last weekend.

grunions. They hatch right on the beach.

### That's amazing.

**Larry:** It is. Then we also have special festivals. We just finished one a few weeks ago called the Whale Fiesta, celebrating the migration of the great whales. It was a day festival with all kinds of organizations here, and music and children's activities. It's just a fun day.

We do beach surveys. We just finished one yesterday. A lot of staff members and volunteers got together at the beach, dragged a big net and identified and counted all the different animals that they caught. This is a data collection type of thing, to do a little research

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# **REC AND PARKS**

# THE ALIVE! INTERVIEW

The fluke of one of the whales seen during Alive's whale-watch excursion.

### continued

on the inside beach. That's just one of the research exercises. We're going to do another one soon on the tide pools, and we have a different group that does that.

I don't know if you've had a chance to see the exploration center, but we have a group that does discovery programs in there with boys and girls. Students and parents can come in to explore and learn on their own. We have some staff in there to help them and guide them along, and we'll do special theme programs at certain times there.

We do tide pool walks, when the tide's right for the general public.

The aquatic nursery is something relatively new. They have their own staff. One of the things they do is they raise animals; jellyfish is one of them. They've been trying to raise abalone; they've been doing shrimp and lobster. But more than anything, they're trying to raise young scientists. Let's say you have a junior-high-school child who wants to do something relating to the ocean. Usually, they're stopped because they don't have the resources. They can come here. If they want to do something that is really legitimate, we will help them out, and we will basically sponsor them. We will let them use our resources - our water, tanks, and so forth, so they can do their little project. The idea of raising young scientists is just amazing. No one does that.

### Instantaneous?

Larry: It all depends. It may take about 35 seconds.

Right now, it's relatively slow. But as soon as April hits, we start really speeding up.

### What would people be surprised to know about the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium?

Larry: I think we're one of the bestkept secrets. I tell people that I work in an aquarium and they say, "Oh, Long Beach?" "No, no, the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium."

### **An Activist Role**

Have you noticed that museums and aquariums are not just places to come and look at beautiful things, but that you've taken an outreach, an activst, role?

Larry: You know, this is just my own personal point of view. Okay, so we take a child. We bring them over here to our aquarium, or they come on a field trip and look at the ocean. Then they have an opportunity to come through the exhibit hall, and then they start looking at all the different fish and the other animals. And, with that, they're going to help save the ocean in their own little way.

A lot of people don't realize how much power boys and girls have. They can

Right. It's the role of an aquarium in this day and age to try to foster that kind of a connection.

Larry: Sure. Absolutely.

### It's almost an educational mission that you have.

Larry: Yes. We do a lot of other things now. For example, there's a new thing called the Marine Protected Area, and it has been enacted by law. In California, the coast has to be protected. We are trying to get the information out to the general public. Some of these areas being protected can be controversial to some of the fishermen because they feel that it's going to limit them from catching fish and so forth. But we are just trying to tell everybody, "Come on, get involved with this thing."

### What is your busiest time?

Larry: Well, in mid-April, we're going to be starting our spring program. We'll be setting up different stations on the inside beach and talking about tide pools, whales and grunions. We'll be hatching grunion eggs. We take grunion eggs, put them in a jar, add salt water, spin them around and all of a sudden the babies pop out instantaneously, right there.

We are really focused on education, teaching people all the way from little kids to adults.

And another thing is that we're very homey, in a sense. If you come here and want to talk to the director, Mike Schaadt

- well, if Mike is not doing anything, he'll come out and talk to you. Same thing with me. Most places, you have to make an appointment. But we're happy to come out and talk to you if we can.

sway their parents. Say their parents accidentally drop a piece of paper. "Oh, don't drop," they might tell their parents, "because we have learned that, no matter where you are, it can fall on the ground, go through the sewer system and land in the water. So you need to pick that up." They have a lot of power. It's not so much that we're training the boys and girls to become big activists. We do it in a subtle way, but I think in a very effective way, too.

Also, we have lectures four times a year where we bring scientists or other people down here to talk a little more indepth about things that are happening. Last Friday, we had a person who wrote books on waves, like, tsunamis and so forth. He gave a real nice lecture.

So those are just some of the other things we're involved with.

– continued



### **City Employees Club of Los Angeles, Alive!**

# REC AND PARKS

More than 100,000 people attend one of **Cabrillo's outreach** programs each year. A significant portion consists of students like these.

CATALINA

CRUISES

HALE WATCH

### - continued

### What are the dangers of not knowing enough about the oceans?

Larry: People really don't really realize how important the ocean is. Seventy percent of the oxygen that we breathe comes from the ocean. We have to protect our oceans. If that ocean dies, we're in trouble here. So we have to take care of it. We are finally realizing how important the ocean is.

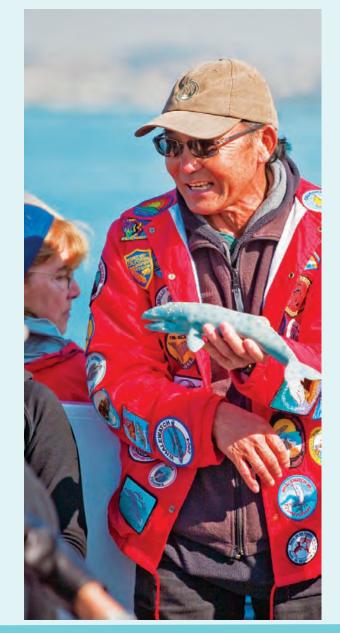
We're finding more about the pollution that's going into the water. Let's say you drop a paper on the ground, you overfertilize your lawn, or whatever. The next rain takes all that stuff, runs it down to the gutter into the catch basin, into the sewer system, and it comes right out here into the ocean. If you have a chance, come on down and check out the mouth of the L.A. River after the first rain of the season. There are solid plastic bags and other junk coming out. And there are other things that we don't even see, like various harmful chemicals and so forth. We have to be more

careful what we put out into the ocean. We all have to work together.



# **Cabrillo's Outreach Programs**

Here's a summary of some of Cabrillo Marine Aquarium's outreach programs. Please check on the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium's Website for current information: www.cabrilloaq.org



### Annual Events

### **Meet the Grunions**

The first of a series of "Meet the Grunion" programs begins in March and continues through July. You can watch the silvery fish come up on the beach to spawn. Learn about grunion and the interesting mating rituals of this curious fish. The aquarium opens at 8 p.m. and an auditorium program begins at 9. Warm clothing and a flashlight are recommended. Tickets are \$5/adults, \$1 seniors, students and children, sold at the door.

WHEN: Predicted times for the fish to run are:

# **Coastal Cleanup and Saltmarsh Open House**

WHEN: September

Keep it clean on International Coastal Cleanup/Adopt-A-Beach Day, and help make a difference in the environment during one of the largest single days of volunteer efforts on the planet.

### **Autumn Sea Fair**

### WHEN: October

Celebrate the bounty of the sea with activities, organizations and fun for all — games, contests, music, marine-related exhibits, demonstrations, arts and crafts, films and videos. Enter the sand sculpture contest. Hunt for buried pirate treasure. Pack a picnic or purchase food and drink from one of the vendors. Admission to the fair is free.

### Sea Scare!

WHEN: Near Halloween

Join the Aquarium for its Halloween event, as the aquarium is transformed into a world of thrills, chills and gills for its

- March: Open Season, March 12, from 11 p.m. to 1 a.m.; March 28 from 10:55 p.m. - 12:55 a.m.
- Closed Season, April 25, from April: 9:50 p.m. to 11:50 a.m.
- May: Closed Season, May 9, from 9:45 p.m. to 11:45 a.m.; May 26, from 11:05 p.m. to 1:05 a.m.
- Open Season, June 9, from June: 10:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.; June 24, from 11 p.m. to 1 a.m.
- Open Season, July 9, from July: 10:50 p.m. to 12:50 a.m.; July 23, from 10:50 p.m. to 12:50 a.m.

### **Open House for Educators**

### WHEN: September

Cabrillo Marine Aquarium has a wide variety of school programs to choose from. Come preview activities from the many free and fee-based programs. Experience these programs to see them in action, and ask questions. Come see how the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium can be a resource for teachers.

annual nighttime Halloween event.

### Whale Fiesta

### WHEN: January

Join the aquarium for tons of fun as it celebrates the migration of the Pacific Gray Whale and the start of the whalewatch season.

### **Earth Day Fair**

### WHEN: April

Celebrate the "ocean planet" with a beach cleanup and courtyard activities including music, children's activities and displays and information from a wide range of local and national environmental groups and government agencies.

### **Shark Week**

### WHEN: July/August

Experience Shark Week at Cabrillo Marine Aquarium, where you can get eye to eye with live sharks and rays of Southern California and learn about their lives in the Susanne Lawrenz-Miller Exhibit Hall.

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# THE ALIVE! INTERVIEW

# Bringing L.A. to the Ocean

### Whale Watch **Opportunities**

Tell me a bit about the Complete Whale Watch, coming up on March 15. That sounds like a great thing to tell our readers about.

Larry: Absolutely. I'm going to do a slide presentation about the whales. And then, right after that, we're going

to jump aboard one of the local whale-watching vessels and I hope find ourselves a whale like we did today. I limit it to 100 people, and I do only two a year. The one on the 15th is the last one of the season.

### And there's a bigger one, too, right? Down in Baja California.

Larry: Right, the overnighter. We call that the Baja Adventure. Every year -usually it's at the end of February to the first part of March - we go on a sevenand-a-half-day trip with 30 passengers and six staff members. We go down to

San Diego and catch a large boat. Then we travel down to Baja, to the lagoons where the whales are. One lagoon in particular is called San Ignacio, and we anchor there. Once we get inside, the whales are all around the boat. We have an opportunity every day to climb on these smaller skiffs called pongas, to see the whales very up-close. The whales are so large that people are afraid to

touch them, but they come up right next to the boat, and you reach over and touch them. Many times, a mother whale will push the baby to the boat and say, "Come, touch the baby. Touch the baby."

Really?

Larry: Yes. It's just amazing. It really is.

How many people do you bring on that trip?

Larry: Only 30. The price is \$2,375 for this year. But it's amazing. It's worth it.

### The Best Part of the Job

What's the best part of your job?

**Larry:** I really feel fortunate to be able to work at a facility like this, right on the beach. I live here in San Pedro, and it takes me only about 12 minutes to get here.

But more than that, we have the greatest people, the most dedicated and creative people working here. They just give their all. That's one of the greatest things.

Plus, I get to work with the general public, the kids, in an educational atmosphere. I really enjoy it. And I don't plan to leave. I'm not a rocking-chair person. There's this saying about fishing: The worst day of fishing is better than the best day at work. I don't agree with that at all. I love what I do.

Thanks for hosting us on the boat today, Larry, and for talking to us about Cabrillo.

Larry: You're welcome, anytime!



Larry Fukuhara explains a point, in his office at Cabrillo Marine Aquarium.

### **Endangered Species Day**

### WHEN: May 17

Visit Cabrillo Marine Aquarium on Endangered Species Day to learn about marine animals that have been placed on the endangered species list and how they are fairing today. Start the day with a guided tidepool walk (8:30 a.m.), then join in a scavenger hunt, special story time and more.

### Sizzlin' Summer Sandcastle Day

### WHEN: July

Do you remember building your first sandcastle Relive those easy breezy days at Cabrillo's Sizzlin' Summer Sandclastle Day. Bring your little shovel, a bucket and your creativity and claim a plot.

### Voyages

### **Baja Adventure**

WHEN: February/March

### **Complete Whalewatch**

### WHEN: March 5, 8:30 a.m. through 1 p.m.

Join Larry Fukuhara, CMA Programs Director, in the John M. Olguin Auditorium at 8:30 a.m. for an informative and fun slide presentation, followed by a voyage in search of Pacific gray whales, other marine mammals and sea life on a local whale watching vessel. The trip returns to the dock by 1 p.m. Fee: \$20. Pre-registration required. For further information, call (310) 548-7562.

### **Blues of Summer**

### WHEN: Summer 2009

The American Cetacean Society/Los Angeles Chapter invites you on a natural-history trip aboard the Condor Express to the blue and humpback whale feeding grounds in the Santa Barbara Channel. Explore one of the most prolific whale-watching locations in the world along with experienced naturalists who will answer your questions. Departs from Santa Barbara. Fee required.

### L.A. Harbor Above and Below

### WHEN: Date to be determined

Join Cabrillo on the water for a hands-on floating lab experience on board the Alguita Marine Research Foundation Vessel Alguita. Net and observe plankton, trawl the bottom and use a benthic mud grab, look for whales, sea lions and sea birds, and take in the sights of the world's busiest harbor.

### Education

### **Science at the Seashore**

### WHEN: All year

There is a wide range of public classes, marine laboratory workshops, field trips and voyages for all ages. Please refer to the Cabrillo Website for specific information.

### **School and Group Programs**

WHEN: All year

This annual Baja expedition takes guests to see gray whale mother and calf pairs up-close in San Ignacio Lagoon, Baja California, Mexico. There are island stops to view elephant seal rookeries, harbor seals and sea lions, nesting seabirds, osprey and hikes on unique islands with indigenous plants and unique geological formations add to this exciting naturalist-led adventure. Thirty participants will eat well and sleep comfortably on the 113-foot Royal Polaris. Fee required.

### Whalewatch

WHEN: December through March Observe Pacific grav whales on their migration along the Southern California coast. Whalewatch boats are scheduled daily through the end of March. Go to sea on any day to observe grav whales on their migration along Southern California's coast.

> Larry Fukuhara brushes a whale, which they enjoy, during a recent Baja Adventure.

### Catalina Above and Below

### WHEN: June

Join CMA staff on an all-day collection trip to Catalina Island aboard the 93-foot fishing vessel First String departing out of Ports O' Call Village. During the crossing we will identify marine birds and be on the lookout for whales and other marine life. Once at Catalina, we will observe the various methods CMA's Aquarist staff use to capture, study and release specimens that are exhibited at the Aquarium. Fees required.

### **Open-Ocean Plankton Class**

WHEN: Date to be determined Aquarium Director Mike Schaadt leads an evening class in learning about unusual deepwater planktonic animals. Attendees meet at Cabrillo at 4 p.m. for an orientation, then it's off to board a vessel for fieldwork, returning at approximately 10 p.m. Space is limited; ages 12 through adult.

Go to the Cabrillo Website to download the current Education Calendar, which includes programs for schools and groups, including guided and unguided Aquarium tours, Sea Search marine biology workshops, Ocean Outreach, Aquatic Nursery, Exploration Center and whalewatch trips.

### **Previsit Guide**

A previsit guide for tour groups visiting the aquarium and coastal areas is available on the Cabrillo Website. The guide is also helpful for classroom and field trip studies.

### Library

Come and visit the Virginia Reid Moore Marine Research Library, your marine information resource center.

### Lectures

### **American Cetacean Society Lecture**

### WHEN: March 31

The American Cetacean Society/Los Angeles Chapter offers free monthly lectures at 7:30 p.m. the last Tuesday of each month at Cabrillo Marine Aquarium in the John M. Olguin auditorium during the whalewatch season. Reservations are not required.