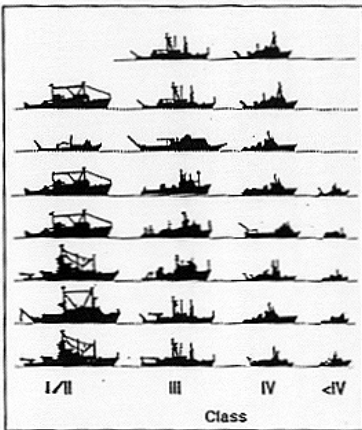




# UNOLS NEWS

\*\*\*\*\*  
VOLUME 14, No.3 Fall 1997  
\*\*\*\*\*



## HIGHLIGHTS

- [Comments from the Chair](#)
- [UNOLS Annual Meeting Highlights](#)
- [UNOLS Council Election Results](#)
- [Charter is Re-Examined](#)
- [NOAA and UNOLS Sign MOA](#)
- [DESSC News](#)
- [DESSC Meeting Announcement](#)
- [RVOC 1997 Meeting Highlights](#)
- [RVTEC 1997 Meeting Highlights](#)
- [FIC Seeks Volunteers](#)
- [FIC Plans for 1998](#)
- [ALVIN/Jason Ops from ATLANTIS](#)
- [Operator Selection for AGOR 26](#)
- [BLUE FIN Replacement Plans](#)
- [HEALY is Launched](#)
- [UNOLS Safety Training Video](#)
- [Planning for the Year of the Ocean](#)

## Comments from the UNOLS Chair...

Dear Colleague,

1998 will be a difficult year for operation of the UNOLS fleet. There will be over two full ship years of lay ups of large ships (Class I-III). The next few years appear to be no better. Over the past few years we have built partnerships with other agencies such as the Naval Oceanographic Office (NAVO) and NOAA. Without the support of these agencies, two to three additional ships probably would not operate. This situation represents the result of a remarkable trend. In the past decade, the ratio of dollars spent for ship operations to dollars spent for ocean science research has declined dramatically at all Federal agencies. Some agencies, such as DOE, no longer fund ocean- going science at all. Others, such as NASA, provide little or no support for ship operations, despite a large ocean science program. Even at NSF, which provides the major share of support for the academic research fleet (approximately 2/3), there has been a remarkable decline in the fraction of dollars used for ship support of sea-going science. The following table illustrates the change (no adjustment for inflation) that has occurred at NSF within the past decade.

NSF Budget	1987	1996	% Change (87 to 96)
Ship Operations	\$ 26.0M	\$ 31.1	20
Ocean Science Research	\$ 66.4M	\$104.9	58
Operational Days	3444	2745	-20
Ship Ops/Research x 100	39.2	29.6	

The intent of this table is not to single out NSF, which has been the most consistent supporter of sea-going science, but rather to illustrate a significant trend: that is, the fraction of at-sea operations in the ocean sciences is much smaller today than it was just ten years ago. The trend does not reflect two unique years, but rather a continual change. Only the addition of new fleet users, such as NAVO, has kept fleet operations at constant levels. Proposals to reduce fleet size have already been articulated by NSF.

- [C.O.R.E. Selected as NOPP Program Office](#)
  - [UNOLS Homepage gets New Look](#)
  - [UNOLS Meeting Calendar](#)
  - [UNOLS Booth at AGU](#)
- 

**Please Visit the UNOLS  
Booth at the  
1997 Fall AGU Conference**

**San Francisco, CA**

**December 9-11**

**Booth #609**

---



The Chief of Naval Research, Admiral Paul Gaffney, commented on the trend towards "cubicle oceanography" in his keynote speech to the 1996 UNOLS Annual Meeting. The data on UNOLS fleet usage seem to clearly reflect a trend towards ocean science performed in offices and laboratories ashore, rather than at sea. The reduction in support for science conducted at sea has received little attention by oceanographers. However, reductions in sea going science will inevitably impact our ability to study the sea. Do we, the ocean science community, need to use ships as much as we used to? The trend in the data suggests an implicit answer - scientists are spending less time at sea. Is this a deliberate trend and is it good for the science?

I am suggesting that we ask ourselves these questions explicitly. If the fleet size decreases, there will be many impacts. We have tried to maintain the fleet size through partnerships to increase our flexibility in supporting global and local science programs. Many more science programs will meet scheduling difficulties with a dramatically smaller fleet because ships will not be as widely distributed geographically. For example, the GLOBEC and the Coastal Mixing and Optics programs conducted simultaneously off the east coast in 1996 could not have been performed in the same year with a smaller fleet. With a smaller fleet, the appropriate ship for the science mission may not be available.

These trends in UNOLS fleet usage occur in part because JGOFS and WOCE are moving from field programs into modeling and synthesis phases. An unintended consequence of having two major programs leave the field simultaneously is a large decrease in ship usage. However, the trend also reflects the ship time requests in unsolicited proposals received by ocean science agencies. There is a perception that proposals for field programs have lower success rates, although this does not appear to be true, at least at NSF. The perception, correct or not, may lead to fewer proposals for field work, reinforcing the trend towards less work performed at sea. It is also true that modeling studies play a larger part in the oceanographic sciences and these proposals generally do not include a sea-going effort, although they are directly dependent on field data for model validation.

We need to seriously consider these trends, because if ships are retired, they will be very difficult to replace. For scale, a major new ship such as THOMPSON, REVELLE or ATLANTIS costs about \$50M in today's dollars, or roughly 25% of the entire NSF annual budget for ocean science research, facilities and deep-sea drilling combined. Community and Federal planning and budgeting for the THOMPSON class vessels began in the mid-1980's and the last of them entered service only this year. A ten to 15 year time frame can be anticipated for bringing future ships on-line once the need is identified. Replacements for ships will be neither quick nor cheap.



If you have thoughts on this issue, I would very much appreciate hearing them. UNOLS plans to have a community forum at the 1998 AGU/ASLO Ocean Sciences Meeting in San Diego (time and place to be announced). The future of the fleet will be a central issue for discussion.

Ken Johnson  
UNOLS Chair



## UNOLS Annual Meeting Highlights

The UNOLS Annual meeting took place at the National Science Foundation on 18 September 1997. Dr. Kenneth H. Brink, Chair of the Ocean Studies Board (OSB) of the National Research Council, provided the keynote address. He began by explaining that the purpose of the OSB is to advise the Federal Government on ocean science and policy. OSB exercises leadership and provide studies on coastal issues, national security, living marine resources, international activities, the status of science, observation systems and global change. Examples of these studies include: Global Ocean Observing Systems (GOOS), U.S.-Mexico Collaboration for Ocean Studies, and Major U.S. Oceanographic Research Programs. OSB maintains ties with the Consortium for Oceanographic Research and Education (CORE) and sees a need to work closely with UNOLS.

Dr. Brink's view is that a phase in large research programs such as JGOFS and WOCE is ending and that a new ocean science agenda is needed. He challenged the membership to bring forth compelling science issues and to work hard to develop a consensus on science directions. He explained that it is also necessary to educate the public and our legislatures on the importance of ocean science.

The meeting continued with committee and agency reports. Ken Johnson reported on a variety of issues which arose over the past year and that were of interest to the UNOLS membership were reported on by Ken Johnson. The past year was highlighted by the signing of two Memorandum of Agreements between UNOLS and CORE and also between UNOLS and NOAA/OAR.

On a light note, Tom Royer made a presentation of the "Ancient Albatross Award." The award signifies the oldest and longest operating research vessel in the UNOLS fleet. It was presented to Tom Royer last year as the UNOLS representative from University of Alaska which operates ALPHA HELIX. ALPHA HELIX began operations in 1966 and is still the oldest vessel in the Fleet. However, Tom Royer is no longer with the University of Alaska (he has moved to Old Dominion Univ.). He presented the award to Tom Weingartner, the new UNOLS Representative from Alaska. Along with the award certificate, Tom Weingartner received a can of Rustoleum.

The meeting concluded with elections to fill three UNOLS Council positions.



Tom Royer shown presenting the Ancient Albatross Award to  
Tom Weingartner, U.Alaska

---

### **UNOLS Holds Elections to Fill Three Council Positions**

At this year's Annual Meeting elections were held to fill three UNOLS Council positions. Bob Knox, Associate Director of Ship Operations and Marine Technical Support at Scripps Institution of Oceanography, was re-elected for a second 3-year term. Bob is a Research Oceanographer in Physical Oceanography. His interests include global and equatorial ocean circulation and acoustic remote sensing.

Thomas Shipley, Research Scientist at the University of Texas, Institute for Geophysics was elected for a first term. His research area is Marine Geology and Geophysics and specializations include convergent margin tectonics and deep ocean seismic stratigraphy. Most of his experience has been with geophysical remote sensing tools, including multichannel seismic techniques. Tom has participated in over 30 cruises in the last 25 years.

Barbara Prezelin, Professor at the University of California, Santa Barbara, was also selected to a first term on the Council. She is a Biological Oceanographer specializing in phytoplankton ecology, with an emphasis on light regulation of photosynthesis and primary production in diverse ocean regions. Barbara has published over 100 scientific publications and environmental assessment and policy reports.

---

### **UNOLS Charter is Re-Examined**

by Clare Reimers

The UNOLS Charter was originally adopted in September 1971 and has been revised, amended and readopted many times since then. A recent debate concerning whether or not membership in UNOLS is open to consortia prompted the UNOLS Council to form an ad hoc committee to re-examine the UNOLS Charter. Clare Reimers (Rutgers University) is chairing the committee with Bob Knox (Scripps) and Rick Jahnke (Skidaway) as members.

The UNOLS Charter sets guidelines for UNOLS membership, describes the organization of UNOLS, the

UNOLS Council and special purpose committees, and it outlines voting, election and meeting procedures that relate to these groups. Given that oceanographic science is diversifying, there is an urgent need for planning the UNOLS fleet of the future, and because there has been a substantial increase in ship use by non-academic parties, the Charter ad hoc committee is seriously considering ways to restructure the UNOLS Charter so that UNOLS can be a more effective user-based organization. Recommendations for changes in the Charter will be proposed at the next UNOLS Council meeting (February 1998). In the meantime, the ad hoc committee is soliciting input from the oceanographic community. A copy of the Charter can be accessed through the UNOLS Homepage: at: <http://www.gso.uri.edu/unols/u charter.html>.

---

## **NOAA and UNOLS Sign Memorandum of Agreement**

On September 17, 1997, UNOLS and NOAA entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) which should help to enhance the utilization of the nation's federal fleet. The MOA, which affects NOAA's OAR division, will make their newest research vessel, RON H. BROWN, more available to university scientists, while at the same time provide greater opportunity for NOAA scientists to access the UNOLS Fleet.

RON BROWN was folded into the 1998 UNOLS scheduling process as part of the cooperative efforts between NOAA and UNOLS. Although BROWN's schedule for 1998 contains only NOAA funded science, in 1999 BROWN will likely be working in the Indian Ocean and be available for other agency funded research. As a result, the NOAA OAR programs in the Atlantic and Pacific would likely be scheduled on UNOLS ships. NOAA is planning approximately \$2.8M for UNOLS ship time in 1998. This level of support is expected to continue into the future. The NOAA/UNOLS MOU was signed by NOAA Director, Dr. D. James Baker and UNOLS Chair, Dr. Kenneth Johnson in a ceremony following the UNOLS Council September Meeting.



NOAA Director, Dr. D. James Baker and UNOLS Chair Ken Johnson shown shaking hands after the signing the MOA.

---

**Don't miss the UNOLS Booth #609**  
**at the**  
**Fall AGU Conference in San Francisco!**

---

**UNOLS COMMITTEE NEWS**

**DEep Submergence Science Committee News**

by M.R. Perfit, DESSC Chair

Uncharacteristically, I will not attempt to cover a lot of ground in this memo. Instead, I urge you read the latest minutes of the July DESSC meeting <http://gso.uri.edu/unols/dessc/meetings/dmin797/dmin797.htm> and to attend the annual DESSC meeting prior to this year's AGU meeting in San Francisco. The DESSC meeting will be held on Sunday the 7th of December in the Moscone Center, Room 238 from 8:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Coffee/tea will be served during the morning session and we have arranged for a modestly priced lunch (\$7.00) to be available during our noon break.

The meeting will again begin with science reports from PIs who have recently used the National Deep Submergence Facilities (DSF), and be followed by operator and agency reports. Details of the new facilities, upgrades, and results of 1997 operations will also be presented. Some of the continuing and pressing issues that I plan to include in the agenda include:

WHOI-DSF plans to upgrade the data products of the vehicles and archiving data from all of the DSF vehicles;

Details of the 1998 vehicle schedules and the status of the preliminary 1999 schedule;

Progress made by the UNOLS ad-hoc review group, DESSC and the funding agencies in implementing ways to facilitate communication regarding proposed and funded projects, and improving the scheduling process;

Status of the U.S. Navy's deep submergence assets (SEACLIFF and ATV);

The future of expeditionary science in the light of "observatory" science and continuing time-series programs.

There have been a number of important developments that will need to be discussed by the deep submergence community during the meeting. If anyone has any particular issues they would like DESSC and the community to discuss during the meeting, please let me know as soon as possible so I can adjust the meeting accordingly.

I would like to remind you that to facilitate planning and compilation of dive proposals and vehicle requests, you can access the on-line "UNOLS/National Deep Submergence Facility Vehicle Request Form - DSV ALVIN, ROV Jason, Argo-II, DSL-120 Sonar", through the Deep Submergence Operations Group's World Wide Web site (<http://www.marine.who.edu/webpub/unols/request.htm>). Because it is

important to continually update the database of vehicle proposals/requests, I urge you to please submit any new requests you may have before December 1 so that the UNOLS Office can compile the results before the DESSC meeting, and to contact WHOI and the UNOLS Office regarding funding decisions on your proposals after this current review cycle.

Although bringing ATLANTIS and upgraded facilities on-line have been the focus of our attention this year, it is critical that we begin deliberating on facility needs (submersible, ROV, AUV) for the next decade and the potential fiscal impacts of various options for providing adequate deep submergence facilities that will serve academic research needs for the future. The community needs to come to a consensus on how to best utilize decommissioned U.S. Navy deep submergence assets and to make the case for the compelling deep submergence science to be done down to 6000m. We must also work with the funding agencies to figure out how to best meet the financial considerations for deep submergence facility needs into the 21st century in order to ensure the health and future of our research. I look forward to seeing you at the meeting in San Francisco, and thanks for your continued interest and efforts in deep submergence science.

---

## **The DEEP SUBMERGENCE SCIENCE COMMITTEE**

Will hold their  
Fall Meeting  
Sunday, December 7, 1997  
Moscone Convention Center, Room 238  
San Francisco, CA  
8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The DEep Submergence Science Committee (DESSC) invites you to attend their fall meeting. The meeting will take place on Sunday, December 7, 1997 at the Moscone Convention Center, Room 238. The agenda can be viewed on the UNOLS/DESSC Website: <http://gso.uri.edu/unols/dessc/dessc.html>.

---

### **Highlights of the 1997 RVOC Meeting**

by Paul Ljunggren, RVOC Chair

The 1997 Research Vessel Operators' Committee (RVOC) Meeting was held at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution from 21-23 October. Despite scheduling conflicts for some of our regular attendees, this meeting was particularly well attended with over 60 people in attendance.

In addition to our regular agenda items a series of presentations were made. Bruce Banks of Jamestown Marine Services provided an introductory overview of his organization. Jamestown Marine Services was awarded the contract to carry out the NSF Inspection Program which entails inspecting all non-Navy vessels in the UNOLS Fleet. Bruce discussed their philosophy in terms of this program and introduced some of his personnel who will be acting as inspectors for the inspection program. Steve Etchemendy of Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute gave a presentation in which he discussed the performance of their SWATH, WESTERN FLYER, and some of the structural problems

they have experienced. His presentation included the analysis of these problems and various corrective measures under consideration.

Ellen Kappel, Rex Buddenberg, Andy Maffei, Dale Chayes, Bob Heinmiller, and Steve Lerner were on hand to discuss SeaNet. Rex gave a presentation on communications technology and what can be expected in terms of new communications systems coming on line in the future and some of their capabilities. Andy Maffei provided an overview of the SeaNet organization and what they intend to offer in terms of infrastructure for facilitating the extension of the Internet to sea. This was followed by a discussion with RVOC members in which we were able to bring up questions and identify services we felt were important along with areas of concern.

Lastly, Bill Hurley of Glosten Associates concluded the presentations with a review of a study that Glosten is undertaking to evaluate the impact of recent regulatory changes specifically as they relate to admeasurement, STCW, ISM, SOLAS etc. The study addresses how the regulations may affect building and crewing of mid-size research vessels in the future. The study when completed will be delivered to the UNOLS FIC.

---

## **RVTEC 1997 Annual Meeting Highlights**

by John Freitag, RVTEC Chair

The 5th annual RVTEC meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. on October 27 at the University of Washington South Campus facility in Seattle. Approximately 50 technician representatives from UNOLS institutions were present. Also present were representatives from Antarctic Support Associates and a delegation of five from the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG). Following introductions, acceptance of minutes and reports of ongoing UNOLS committees and business, issues were addressed beginning with a discussion of the HEALY science testing program. HEALY is the first USCG icebreaker with science research defined in its mission statement. The Coast Guard has asked for academic community involvement in the development of a science testing plan for the ship's shakedown period. This request originated within UNOLS-AICC and the intent is involvement in both the planning and the testing phases of the program. The ultimate goal voiced by the AICC is the inclusion of technicians from UNOLS institutions in all HEALY scientific operations. The actual procurement of the scientific suite is to be undertaken by the shipyard. The ice trial shakedown is planned to take place in the summer of 1999 and will include ocean as well as ice testing. Although we did not begin to formulate an actual testing plan at the meeting, several interested individuals were identified to undertake planning of various portions of the test plan.

The afternoon session opened with Woody Sutherland (SIO) giving a report on the UNOLS/NAVO work. NAVO has been very pleased with the quality of data and the cooperation received under this program. Time was necessary early on for both parties to become accustomed to each other's way of doing business. From all appearances this went very smoothly and everyone adjusted well. It looks as if this work will continue for another year and hopefully into the future.

The major agenda item for the afternoon session was a report by Dale Chayes (LDEO) and Rex Buddenberg of the Naval Post Graduate School, Monterey on the status of SeaNet. Since our 1993 meeting in La Jolla when Rex Buddenberg and Ellen Kappel introduced us to the concept of SeaNet, new players have come into the loop, there have been technology advances, and various institutions have gone their own way in efforts to achieve connectivity at sea. Ellen Kappel of JOI submitted a \$1.5M NOPP proposal to assemble the infrastructure and place prototype systems on ships. This proposal was funded and in September a working group was assembled for a two day meeting at the Brookings Institution in



Washington. Several RVTEC members were in attendance. Rex and Dale Chayes are integral parts of the Principal Investigator team and agreed to bring the group up-to-date on the new players, the technology and the prospects. In addition, Dale arranged with COMSAT to provide RVTEC with some practical technician-type insight into Inmarsat terminals. Rex provided insight into the upcoming realm of LEOs and how the concept is going to change communication at sea. These multi-satellite networks, which function somewhat like a cell phone network in reverse, will soon allow every cruise participant to carry his or her own connectivity to sea in the form of a portable phone, possibly as soon as the turn of the century.

The meeting adjourned to the UW dock for a tour of R/V THOMPSON and a reception hosted by the School of Fisheries and Oceanography.

Tuesday's session opened with the meeting's feature program, a tutorial on the various aspects of Marine Corrosion given by Mr. Bill Riffe of Marine Environmental Research, Inc. Bill has had many years experience in the field. He covered practical and chemical aspects of the corrosion process and gave anecdotal evidence of how it applies to our work. The presentation continued after lunch with a Q & A session.

Subcommittee reports consumed much of the remainder of the afternoon. Tom Wilson of the State University of New York at Stony Brook presented a report from the On-line Resources subcommittee. The status of the RVTEC "Home Port" Web site was outlined, along with a proposal to investigate shifting all or part of the site from the URI mainframe to a PC at SUNY. A strawman proposal for the format of an on-line equipment database was discussed and suggestions were solicited. A proposed RVTEC logo was also presented. A motion was made by Sandy Shor and seconded by Rich Findley to accept Tom's second design as the official RVTEC logo. The motion passed without dissent.

Steve Poulos of the University of Hawaii, Chair of the Data Interchange Subcommittee, was unable to be present to report on the work of the committee. John Freitag reported that FIC had considered and endorsed RVTEC's proposal to adopt NetCDF as the data standard and ISO 9660 format CDROM as the storage standard. A request was made to include appropriate links to on-line NetCDF resources from the RVTEC Home Port.

Rich Findley of the University of Miami presented a report from the Long Range Instrumentation Planning Subcommittee. He described present models of data collection and distribution using sensors that are collected by a single computer and then distributed to clients. He then presented a proposed model using Keithley Smartlink modules that convert sensor inputs directly to a TCP/IP network interface, enabling any network client to request data from any sensor directly using standard commercial network protocols (e.g. Dynamic Data Exchange DDE).

The afternoon ended with a discussion of the proposed RVTEC salary survey. The primary intent of this survey was to provide managers with an idea of industry averages throughout the UNOLS community and for use as a tool to justify salaries for shipboard technicians. There was some dissent regarding collection of the data and the need for such a survey although the majority clearly favored a survey. In the end it was decided that publication of the data was not a totally accepted idea and that the results would be kept at the UNOLS Office and disseminated by request.

The meeting adjourned to the Sea Bird facility for a plant tour and general question session.

The final session opened with a discussion of the International Marine Technician 1998 (INMARTECH 98) meeting. The idea of combining the RVTEC meeting and INMARTECH 98 was presented and well received, although it was generally agreed that we would need a day alone to discuss strictly RVTEC business. Sandy Shor (NSF) indicated that the NSF backs this idea and will be providing some funding to

the effort. In discussing possible locations for the meeting, it was noted that an international meeting of this nature has various logistical considerations. It was desired to hold the meeting at an institution near a major ocean industry center and convenient to air travel facilities. It was also felt that it would be desirable to minimize the necessity for rental cars and this should be taken into account in the selection process. In the end it was moved and seconded to deviate from our usual East-West sequence and hold the meeting in the San Diego area. The matter passed without dissent.

The session continued with a series of "show and tells" by meeting participants. Tom Wilson presented results of a comparison of broadband and narrowband Acoustic Doppler Current Profilers conducted aboard R/V SEWARD JOHNSON. John Freitag presented a verbal summary of a report he prepared for NSF on the current state of the market for vessel mounted Doppler Current Profilers. Copies of the report will be included as an addendum to the RVTEC meeting minutes. Tom Wilson then presented preliminary information regarding beta tests of the SeaTrak GPS attitude/heading sensor. SeaTrak is being developed by Seagull Technology of Los Gatos, CA with a planned release date of early 1998.

The final order of business was elections. Tony Amos of the University of Texas was elected as Vice Chair. The term began at the adjournment of the meeting and will end at adjournment of the 1999 Annual RVTEC meeting. Tom Wilson was re-appointed as the Chair of the On-line Resources subcommittee. Steve Poulos was re-appointed as Chair of the Data Standards subcommittee. Rich Findley was re-appointed as Chair of the Long Range Instrumentation planning subcommittee. Don Moller was re-appointed as the Chair of the Wire and Cable Specifications subcommittee.

Following a short discussion on topics for next year, thanks were given to Neil Bogue (UW) and Mike Webb (NOAA-PMC) for co-hosting the meeting. The meeting adjourned at noon.

---

## **UNOLS Fleet Improvement Committee**

### **Seeks Volunteers**

Dr. Larry Atkinson, UNOLS Fleet Improvement Committee Chair, is seeking volunteers that can be called upon to serve as committee and subcommittee members. As committee terms open and subcommittees are formed, the FIC would like to be able to draw from a list of willing, sea-going scientists to fill these positions. The Fleet Improvement Committee works to assure the continuing excellence of the UNOLS fleet, to improve the capability and effectiveness of individual ships to assure that the number, mix and overall capability of ships in the UNOLS fleet match the science requirements of academic oceanography in the U.S. Subcommittee activity includes the development of science mission requirements for a variety of size/capability-classes of research ships. Volunteers should have sea-going experience on oceanographic research vessels. If interested in adding your name to the FIC list of volunteers, please submit your name, address, phone/fax, e-mail, a description of your research interests to the UNOLS Office by e-mail, [unols@gso.uri.edu](mailto:unols@gso.uri.edu).

---

## **Fleet Improvement Committee Plans for Upcoming Year**

by Larry Atkinson, FIC Chair

The Fleet Improvement Committee (FIC) of UNOLS met at the NOAA Pacific Marine Center in Seattle on 7-8 November. The new Chair, Larry Atkinson, presided. The main goal of the meeting was to

develop a long term agenda for FIC while coping with short term issues. FIC is entrusted with managing the main instrument of oceanography, the research ship. To that end we worked on the following agenda items and reached the following conclusions:

Planning, Analysis and Communication - The need to better understand the research ship needs of oceanographers and the realities of our governmental world necessitate long term planning, analysis of trends and communication of that information to the research ship users. In the coming year we will analyze trends in ship use and present the findings in EOS or a similar publication. We will also, in collaboration with the UNOLS Council, host "town meetings" at national meetings.

Fleet Improvement Plan (FIP) - The Fleet Improvement Plan will be in draft form by November 1998 and in final form in November 1999. The FIP will face the political realities and will include the input from the town hall meetings.

A Science Mission Requirement (SMR) document for the replacement of ALPHA HELIX - ALPHA HELIX must be replaced in a few years. FIC is creating a subcommittee chaired by Tom Weingartner (U.Alaska, Fairbanks) to address the requirements of a new ship in the North Pacific. The SMR will address the needs of general purpose oceanographic research in Alaska waters including ice strengthening and fisheries research. The draft report will be ready by summer 1998 and the final report by winter 1998.

East Coast SMR - A science mission requirements document for an east coast regional research vessel will be drafted on the same schedule as the ALPHA HELIX SMRs. Dr. Atkinson will chair the committee.

Fisheries SMR - There is an increasing need for vessels capable of performing state-of-the-art fisheries research. Attributes of such a vessel include after deck trawling facilities and acoustic fish measuring equipment. This SMR will be on hold until the ALPHA HELIX SMR is well along as we can learn from it.

Intermediate Vessel SMR - The development of a science mission requirements document for replacement of the Class III ships will be on hold until the ALPHA HELIX SMR is more developed.

Central Pacific Research Vessel - The Navy will soon start design and construction of a Central Pacific research vessel. The FIC will be involved in an advisory role with the operator institution (not selected as yet). In this role the FIC represents any future user of the ship.

While the duty of FIC is to look to the future of the research fleet we hope to include as many ship users as possible. Therefore, please review the information we send out and have on the WWW site, please let us know your opinions and please attend the town hall meetings.

---

## **SHIP AND FACILITIES IN THE NEWS**

---

### **R/V ATLANTIS Supports Joint ALVIN/Jason Cruise**

The first joint UNOLS National Facility deep submergence operation for science, utilizing the submersible ALVIN, Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) Jason, and DSL-120 kHz sonar mapping system, embarked on a research cruise to the Juan de Fuca Ridge this fall. Both vehicles were launched

and recovered during the same cruise and were supported by the new ship, R/V ATLANTIS. The cruise took place on 6-27 September with Chief Scientists, Dr. John Delaney of the Univ. of Washington and Dr. Chuck Fisher of Penn State Univ. Information regarding the scientific and operational objectives of the cruise are posted on the following web sites:  
<http://www.ocean.washington.edu/outreach/revel/> and <http://www.marine.who.edu/ships/alvin/alvin.htm>.

---

### **Operator to be Selected for AGOR 26**

An announcement has been published in the Commerce Business Daily for operator selection for AGOR 26. The Defense Appropriations Committee provided \$45M to the Defense budget in 1997 to construct a vessel (AGOR 26) to replace MOANA WAVE. The Navy was directed to evaluate a SWATH design in this process. A deadline of 17 October was set for interested parties to request the Request for Proposal (RFP). Proposals are due on 5 December and selection of the operator is planned for January 1998.

---

### **Skidaway soon to Replace BLUE FIN**

Skidaway will soon begin construction of their new research vessel to be named R/V SAVANNAH that will replace BLUE FIN. Construction should start late this year. The ship will be a conventional design mono-hull and will work in the coastal waters off Georgia.

---

### **HEALY is Launched**

The U.S. Coast Guard's new Icebreaker, HEALY, was launched on 15 November 1997. A delivery date is planned for late 1998. Science operations on the ship will begin in the year 2000.

---

### **UNOLS Safety Training Video in Production**

The RVOC Safety Committee has submitted a proposal through WHOI to NSF for production of a Safety Training Video. NSF has funded the proposal and the committee met on 1 October to outline the video plans. Jamestown Marine Services was selected to produce the video and attended the meeting. The video will address the topics covered in Chapter 1, the Research Party Supplement of the RVOC Safety Training Manual.

---

### **1998 Celebrates the Year of the Ocean**

The United Nations has designated 1998 as the Year of the Ocean. EXPO '98 will be held in Lisbon, Portugal. NOAA has announced that their vessel RON BROWN will participate in the Year of the Ocean with a visit to Lisbon in May. Mike Reeve has been designated as official coordinator for NSF's associated plans. NSF will encourage "outreach" activities associated with this event.

---

### **C.O.R.E. Selected as the NOPP Program Office**

Consortium for Oceanographic Research and Education (CORE) has been selected as the National Oceanographic Partnership Program (NOPP) program office. Some of the activities they will be involved

in include coordinating a "Virtual Ocean Data Center Workshop" which will be web based. They are developing Terms of Reference for the National Oceanographic Research Leadership Council (NORLC). They are also assisting with the Ocean Research Advisory Panel (ORAP) charter development and membership. An annual report to Congress on the progress of NOPP will be prepared. In 1998, NOPP is expected to be funded at \$28.5M with \$7.5M for the Navy use of UNOLS vessels. Ten agencies have expressed interest in supporting the Partnership Program in out years.

---

## **The UNOLS Homepage Gets a New Look**

You may have noticed that UNOLS Homepage is sporting a new look these days. David Avery, a graduate student at the URI Graduate School of Oceanography and part-time employee at the UNOLS Office, is our new Webmaster. In addition to posting the UNOLS ship schedules, meeting minutes and agendas, request forms, reports, and job opportunities; David has taken it upon himself to reorganize and "spruce-up" the Website. He continues to make changes whenever time permits. We hope that you enjoy the new look and please feel free to send in your comments and suggestions.

**<http://www.gso.uri.edu/unols/unols.html>**

---

## **UNOLS Calendar**

### **MEETING LOCATION DATES**

DESSC AGU, San Francisco, CA 7 December 1997  
AICC New Orleans, LA 21-22 January 1998  
UNOLS Council Galveston, TX 2-3 February, 1998  
FIC Woods Hole, Ma May, 1998  
Schedule Review NSF, Arlington, VA Spring, 1998  
DESSC Woods Hole, MA Spring, 1998  
AICC TBD TBD  
UNOLS Council TBD Summer, 1998  
Ship Scheduling Comm. NSF, Arlington, VA September 1998  
Schedule Review NSF, Arlington, VA September 1998  
UNOLS Council TBD Fall, 1998  
UNOLS Annual TBD Fall, 1998  
RVOC U.Hawaii, Honolulu, HI October 1998  
RVTEC SIO, San Diego, CA Fall, 1998  
FIC TBD Fall, 1998  
DESSC AGU, San Francisco, CA December 1998

---

**Please Visit the UNOLS Booth at the**

**1997 Fall AGU Conference**

**San Francisco, CA**

**December 9-11**

**Booth #609**

---

Be sure to visit the UNOLS Booth at AGU to gain the latest information on the Research Fleet. The booth will include posters and literature on UNOLS, its committees, ships and facilities. An internet link will be available to view the UNOLS Website and the revised UNOLS electrical ship time request form. We hope to see you there.

---

**To view UNOLS News on the Web,  
go the UNOLS Homepage site:  
<http://gso.uri.edu/unols/unols.html>**

---

I would like to thank all who contributed information and articles for this issue of the Newsletter. Articles are always welcome and encouraged. Copy can be submitted via mail, FAX or e-mail. The next newsletter is planned for Winter/Spring 1998.

Thank you,  
Annette DeSilva  
Editor, UNOLS News

e-mail: [unols@gso.uri.edu](mailto:unols@gso.uri.edu)  
phone: (401) 874-6825  
FAX: (401) 874-6167  
Mail: UNOLS Office, P.O. Box 392, Saunderstown, RI 02874

---