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PMMC Open House Was a Success

The PMMC officially opened our-doors to the public on Monday, July 29 . More than 70 visitors passed through our modest facility to quick-tour and nod their heads, mostly in approval. Later that evening, approximately 30 or more people attended the presentation by researcher **Pieter Folkens** who lectured about recent critter-cam work taking place in Frederick Sound. Dr. Folkens brought video clips showing the process of attaching a camera by means of a plunger system to humpback

The latter part of August will find the crew of EVOLUTION joining with a crew from National Geographic to continue critter-cam work. Ultimately, the video product is expected to be shown on television as a National Geographic special. This is aside from the critter-cam video production currently underway by the Alaska Whale Foundation.

The National Audubon Society has published a new Guide To Marine Mammals of the World. This is a comprehensive guide book illustrated by Pieter Folkens and is currently available locally at Sing Lee Alley Books. The PMMC shared Dr. Folkens with Tina Green at the bookstore during our open house and the following day.

Pieter was available for book signings both days. There was reception by locals and travelers who came in on the Sea Lion and Snow Goose.

Drama on the High Seas

Incidentally, those same tourists were treated to a dramatic encounter between a pod of Orcas teaching hunting and dining techniques to their young and an immature sea lion. After the sea lion met violent end, the adult Orcas diverted their attention to a nearby cow-calf humpback pairing.

As the Orcas approached the Humpback calf, the cow assumed a defensive position between the Orcas and her calf. Then in a very unusual (at least previously unrecorded) event a nearby, but unrelated humpback made an aggressive approach toward the Orca calves. The adult orcas then broke off their own interest in the humpback calf and directed their own threatened calves away from the scene.

Many visitors to the center the following day described this

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Many visitors to the center the following day described this as the highlight of their trip. Most wouldn't know it would be a highlight for most trips, anytime, anywhere.

Which vessel was also nearby as witness to the encounter? Delphinus with Skipper, Ronn Patterson, his clients, and Pieter Folkens.

Networking

The day following his

presentation, July 30, Pieter Folkens introduced us to William Rossiter, President of the Cetacean Society International. Mr. Rossiter was very pleased with and encouraging to the Center and our organization's mission of public education.

Mr. Rossiter has an extensive outreach into organizations and foundations on the east coast and beyond. He offered his help in our pursuits.

For anyone interested in the CSI you may check www.csiwhalsalive.org on the internet. There is a description of the organization and a recent newsletter among other articles of interest on the site.

Whale Camp hiccup

The whale camp experience which we started last year suffered a hiccup this season. Although arrangements were made with the principal parties, i.e. Dr. Jan Straley U of A Sitka, Scott Roberge of Tongass Kayak Adventures and Don Holmes, we were unsuccessful at attracting enough student participation.

We are still in a steep learning curve mode with all of our programs. What we learned with this venture is that we need to begin advertising efforts now for next year! We discovered many interested visitors to the center who would have liked to attend the camp if their plans could have been made earlier.

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