



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Media Contacts:

Melissa Kruth
Shedd Aquarium
312/692-3330
mkruth@sheddaquairum.org

Sheena Quinn
PCI
312/558-1770, ext. 108
squinn@pci-pr.com

BY LAND AND BY AIR,

**SHEDD'S WHALES, DOLPHINS, SEA LIONS, OTTERS, PENGUINS
AND MORE COME HOME TO NEW OCEANARIUM**

World's premier marine mammal pavilion reopens to the public on Saturday, May 23

CHICAGO – After nearly nine months of being “on vacation,” the Shedd Aquarium today announced the return of its beloved beluga whales, Pacific white-sided dolphins, and Alaska sea otters. Shedd also welcomed some new animals to the Oceanarium family, including two California sea lions, temperate weather penguins, a new Pacific white-sided dolphin and several Pacific Northwest fishes.

“Animal care is our top priority and all of the animals travelled extremely well, thanks to the months of training we did with them beforehand. Whether by road, by air, or a combination of the two, we carefully planned each transport to ensure all animals traveled safely and quickly,” said Ken Ramirez, senior vice president of animal collections and training. “It’s hard to believe nine months ago our animals and their trainers went to other accredited zoos and aquariums and now they are back. We missed our animals and staff, and we are very excited to have all of them back home in Chicago. We are equally excited to welcome some new animals to our ‘family’ and can’t wait for our guests to connect with all the animals in the Oceanarium on May 23.”

About the Animal Transports

How do you transport seven beluga whales, two Pacific white sided dolphins, and two California sea lions? By FedEx, of course. With thanks to the world’s largest all-cargo carrier, FedEx planes brought Shedd’s precious cargo back to Chicago. From Hartford, Conn., FedEx Express brought home Shedd’s whales and dolphins, and from Tacoma, Wash., FedEx Express transported Shedd’s newest members, the sea lions.

“FedEx strives to make a positive difference in the communities we serve, whether here in Chicago or across the globe,” said William J. Logue, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of FedEx Express. “We at FedEx are happy to put our logistics expertise to work and make this special delivery for the Shedd Aquarium.”

“We are very grateful to FedEx for their support and care of transporting our animals,” said Ted A. Beattie, Shedd Aquarium President/CEO.

Trucks were the main mode of transportation for Shedd’s Alaska sea otters that returned from the Minnesota Zoo, along with temperate weather penguins that arrived from various accredited zoos across the country.

Planes and trucks were the mode of transportation of Miami Seaquarium’s Pacific white-sided dolphin, and for all of the new Pacific Northwest fishes. The shortest transport, however, was moving Shedd’s resident California sea lion, Tyler, from a behind the scenes area to his new habitat in the Oceanarium.

Marine Mammal Favorites Return to Shedd

After their “vacation” at the Mystic Aquarium and Institute for Exploration, beluga whales Naluark, Mauyak, Naya, Puiji, Kayavak, Bella, and Miki have returned home. According to Ramirez, the biggest adjustment the beluga whales had to make while away was getting used to the snow and the seagulls.

Along with the beluga whales, Shedd’s four Pacific white-sided dolphins spent their “vacation” at the Mystic Aquarium and Institute for Exploration. Piquet and Katrl have returned home, while Tique and Kri have been temporarily relocated to the Miami Seaquarium as part of the North American breeding cooperative.

All five of Shedd’s Alaska sea otters, one of which is an Exxon-Valdez oil spill survivor, have returned from their “vacation” at the Minnesota Zoo.

Shedd’s resident California sea lion, Tyler, remained in Shedd’s care behind the scenes, along with 12 Rockhopper penguins. They have all moved to their new habitats a few yards away.

Nearly 20 Shedd staff members who were on location in Mystic, Conn. and Minnesota have all returned home safely, as well. Shedd’s strong commitment to providing consistent animal care meant that Shedd’s expert animal care staff packed up and moved to care for the animals during their nine month “vacation.”

Shedd’s Newest Residents

Shedd has acquired two California sea lions from the state of Washington as part of a relocation plan to protect endangered salmon at the Bonneville Dam along the Washington/Oregon border. The two sea lions – named Otis and Biff – were named for places along the Pacific Coast where they live.

Pacific white-sided dolphin Ohana has arrived at Shedd from the Miami Seaquarium as part of the two accredited marine mammal organizations’ support of the North American breeding cooperative. Ohana was born at the Seaquarium in 2006 and will remain at Shedd while Kri and Tique are away.

In further support of its mission, Shedd modified its penguin habitat and collection to feature temperate weather penguins. Shedd’s 12 resident Rockhopper penguins, which spend considerable time in temperate climates, are now joined by eight Magellanic penguins.

For the first time, the Oceanarium will be home to dozens of fish. From anemone, octopus, jellies and isopods in the *Polar Play Zone* exhibit, to flounders, surfperch, sculpins and more in the South River estuary, Shedd’s marine mammal pavilion is expanding its educational reach.

Opening Events

On May 23, Shedd reopens the Oceanarium doors to the public with a weekend-long celebration. Check Shedd’s Web site for more details about the animal homecoming festivities: www.sheddaquarium.org.

Editor’s Note: Feel free to visit our new FTP site to download video and photographs of all our Oceanarium animal transports. Visit <https://secure.filesanywhere.com/fs/v.aspx?v=896d668d60667375ad6c> and type in the password: sheddaq1

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*Shedd Aquarium is supported by the people of Chicago and the State of Illinois.
Shedd Aquarium is an accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA)
and the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums.*