

State helps dedicate new coastal studies lab in Provincetown

By **MARY ANN BRAGG**
STAFF WRITER

PROVINCETOWN – The rare appearance in Provincetown of the state's top environmental official captured the attention yesterday of scientists, donors and other supporters of the Provincetown Center for Coastal Studies.

Ian Bowles, state secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs, helped dedicate the center's new, 11,000-square-foot lab and education center on Holway Avenue at a ceremony attended by about 100 people.

The nonprofit center, founded in 1976, is focused regionally on protecting marine animals and coastal ecosystems through research and education, and has a \$2 million annual budget, according to center materials. Its new facility, built in 1966 as a church school and now named the Hiebert Marine Laboratory, was purchased and renovated for \$2.5 million.

The new building will house the center's science, research and education staff, and includes an 850-



STEVE HEASLIP/Cape Cod Times

Stormy Mayo studies plankton at the Provincetown Center for Coastal Studies Hiebert Marine Laboratory.

square-foot library on the upper level, and a 1,500-square-foot conference area on the lower level, both available for public use, according to the center's Web site.

"Good science" is the key to the center's success, said board member Katharine Bachman.

The building is named for Dr. Daniel Hiebert – at

one time the only physician in town – his wife, Emily, and their daughter Ruth. Ruth Hiebert was a long-time center supporter and a member of its board when she died in 2004 at the age of 81, according to a center newsletter.

Retiring executive director Peter Borrelli and others had hoped Bowles might speak at the opening about ocean management legislation pending on Beacon Hill, Borrelli said earlier this week.

The legislation could help set priorities for ocean-based projects, such as wind farms, clarify the regulatory process and facilitate communication among state agencies, according to proponents.

Instead, Bowles gave assurances that two often-competing interests – utility companies and conservationists – will work together within his agency, reorganized in April under the direction of Gov. Deval Patrick.

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