

The Crest

Current Issues in Coastal Ocean and Estuarine Science

VIMS Honors Castagna

VIMS named the hatchery facility at the Eastern Shore Laboratory in honor of the late Emeritus Professor Dr. Michael Castagna during a June 11th ceremony in Wachapreague. The naming coincided with a visit to the Lab by the VIMS council for their quarterly meeting.

The *Castagna Shellfish Research Hatchery* honors Castagna for his 42 years of service to VIMS. Castagna passed away on January 18th, 2004 after a long illness. He is survived by his wife Mary; his daughter Kathy Anderson; sons Michael, Robert, and John; and nine grandchildren.

Castagna began working at VIMS in 1962 when Dr. William J. Hargis hired him to direct the newly established Eastern Shore Lab (ESL).

“That was no small task,” says current ESL Director Dr. Mark Luckenbach. “Mike had to begin by literally building the lab. Lacking much of a budget, he and his small staff

actually did most of the construction work themselves.”

In the decades that followed, Castagna led the lab to an international reputation for its work in molluscan biology and aquaculture. He is widely credited as a founding father of hard clam aquaculture on the East Coast, an

industry now valued at nearly \$100 million.

“Mike made a tremendous contribution in building and running the lab,” says Luckenbach. “He unselfishly gave his time, energy, and knowledge to make this field station a valuable resource for VIMS and the College.”

Since his retirement in 1992, Castagna remained active in

research, outreach, and service to professional societies.

“Mike will be greatly missed by his many colleagues and friends,” says Luckenbach. “We trust that bestowing his name on the hatchery will help remind us on a daily basis of his many contributions.”



Dr. Mike Castagna