

Maribeth Stewart: This is April 25, 2016. We are speaking with Dr. Walter Blogoslawski who is marking his 45th year at the Milford Laboratory of the National Marine Fishery Service, and who will be retiring this summer. Walter, when did you first become interested in marine science?

Walter Blogoslawski: When I was 11 years old and on a trip to Bermuda with my parents. They allowed me to rent a hard hat dive suit. I was enthralled watching marine fish at the bottom of Bermuda Sound. What an experience for an eleven-year-old. We spent our summers at our home right on the water in Clinton, Connecticut. When I was fourteen, I became seriously interested in studying marine animals and plants. I loved snorkeling in Long Island Sound and raced sailboats and just enjoyed everything associated with saltwater. Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* solidified my desire to protect the marine environment through work in the marine field.

MS: So, early on, you were fascinated with the ocean and the life in it. I understand that you always wanted to observe it. Can you describe how you satisfied that need?

WB: Yes. First, through snorkeling. Then later on when I was around eighteen, through scuba diving. Jacques Cousteau's work was a great influence on my life. When I was young, my favorite TV show was *Sea Hunt* with Lloyd Bridges. When I was twenty-four, I built a concrete habitat sited off our Clinton home so that I could observe underwater life for longer periods of time than a scuba tank allowed. I learned more about habitats when I worked on the Apollo Space Program and later was fortunate to spend some time in the NOAA sea lab habitat in St. Croix, the Virgin Islands. I still love to scuba dive and plan to continue diving as long as I'm able.

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