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**THUNDER BAY CELEBRATES 5<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY  
WITH HONORS FOR  
U.S. SENATOR CARL LEVIN AND SANCTUARY VOLUNTEER BETTY KRUEGER**

**Alpena, MI** – U.S. Senator Carl Levin and Sanctuary volunteer Betty Krueger will be honored with the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation (NMSF) 2005 Stewardship Award, September 17<sup>th</sup>, during a tribute gala to celebrate the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary. World renowned ocean explorer and NMSF Trustee Dr. Robert Ballard will serve as Master of Ceremonies for the event, and Congressman Bart Stupak will present the City of Alpena with the Preserve America Certificate as part of the White House initiative that encourages and supports community efforts to preserve and enjoy our priceless cultural and natural heritage. State Representative Matthew Gillard is expected to participate in the events as well.

Senator Levin is being honored for his leadership on Great Lakes issues, particularly for securing the designation of Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and subsequently the additional funding for the Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center. Levin co-chairs the Senate Great Lakes Task Force where he's fought hard to protect the environmental and economic interests of the Great Lakes, four of which border his home state. He authored legislation which led to new standards of environmental protection for these valuable waters and helped win passage of the Great Lakes Legacy Program in 2002 to clean up contaminated sediments. Senator Levin has also worked diligently to guarantee funding to prevent further invasions of aquatic species.

"Whether they are preserving history through underwater archaeology or protecting the future through marine conservation, the National Marine Sanctuaries are national treasures," said Levin. "I have seen first-hand at the Thunder Bay Sanctuary in Michigan the work of the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation in supporting these vital sanctuaries and it is a great honor to receive this award."

Betty Krueger will receive the Stewardship Award for her tireless efforts on behalf of Thunder Bay, especially for her development and management of the sanctuary's volunteer program. Krueger has been a volunteer for Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary since before its designation and currently serves as citizen-at-large for the Sanctuary Advisory Council.

"As a lifelong resident of Alpena, I truly appreciate the natural and cultural heritage we have in Thunder Bay," said Krueger. "It has been a delight to see the attention and focus that the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary has brought to our community and I am proud to be associated with its efforts."

The Stewardship Awards and Anniversary gala will be held from 6:30pm-9:00pm at the new Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center, following a public grand opening of the Center from 11:00am-1:00pm. These are the first events to take place at the new 20,000 square foot facility, which features a Discovery Center, an auditorium with capability to show live video feeds from shipwrecks, and an archaeological conservation laboratory. It's expected to attract some 60,000 tourists a year.

"This is an incredibly exciting time for the sanctuary and the state of Michigan," said Jeff Gray, Manager of Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary. "The Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center will offer resources to maritime historians and researchers that are unparalleled in this region, not to mention the exciting new educational opportunities through real time video links to shipwrecks."

During the gala, Congressman Bart Stupak will present the City of Alpena with its Preserve America Certification. Alpena is one of 247 areas that First Lady Laura Bush has designated as Preserve America Communities. The Preserve America Initiative is a White House program that encourages and supports community efforts to preserve and enjoy our priceless cultural and natural heritage. It recognizes and designates communities that protect and celebrate their heritage, use their historic assets for economic development and community revitalization, and encourage people to experience and appreciate local historic resources through education and heritage tourism programs.

The Thunder Bay 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration is hosted by Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation. Sponsors include Alpena Marc LLC, Thunder Bay Manufacturing Corporation, Alpena Power Company, Alpena Regional Medical Center, LaFarge North America-Alpena Plant, Oppenheimer, RS Information Systems Inc., Sports Unlimited and Women's Health Center of Alpena.

"The future has never held so many possibilities for the nation's youngest sanctuary," said Lori Arguelles, Director of the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation. "We are delighted to have so many generous supporters to help us celebrate the Sanctuary's 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and there could no better time to honor two of its greatest friends, Senator Carl Levin and Sanctuary volunteer Betty Krueger."

Located in Lake Huron, the 448-square-mile Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve was established in 2000 to protect an estimated 200 historically significant shipwrecks ranging from nineteenth century wooden side-wheelers to twentieth century steel-hulled steamers. The sanctuary brings to the American public the lore of Great Lakes maritime heritage through exploration, education and research.

The National Marine Sanctuary Foundation is the private, non-profit partner to the federally managed National Marine Sanctuary System; and was created to inspire all people to preserve, protect and promote our nationwide network of marine sanctuaries. These 14 marine protected areas encompass over 131,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters stretching from the Florida Keys to the Hawaiian Islands, from Lake Huron to the Gulf of Mexico. Through public and private sector partnerships the Foundation creates conservation-based research, education and outreach programs designed to connect the public with these special ocean and coastal resources.