

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 29, 2010



## MAGIC OF THE NORTH ARRIVES AT THE VANCOUVER AQUARIUM

**VANCOUVER, B.C.** – It's beginning to look a lot like the holiday season with *Magic of the North* at the Vancouver Aquarium. There is fun for the whole family, including traditional favourites for those who have been good this year such as the return of Scuba Claus and the lighting of our electric eel Christmas tree!

Everyone is invited to hop on board the Polar Express 4-D Experience – a 20-minute cinematic adventure complete with the rumble of the train and magical falling snow right inside the 4-D theatre. Plus, smell the heavenly scent of hot chocolate on this mystical ride to the North Pole.

Explore the fascinating *Canada's Arctic* exhibit which has been transformed into a winter wonderland. You can join Santa's helpers with holiday crafts, sing along to holiday carols and write a letter to Scuba Claus telling him how you plan to live more sustainably in 2011.

Celebrate the annual return of Scuba Claus as he dives into the Strait of Georgia exhibit where he will merrily swim amongst the halibut, herring, sturgeon and sea stars. Weekends starting November 27 and daily from December 18 to 23.

Watch as an ice carver diligently work on his next ice creation out on the beluga deck – unique to the Aquarium on December 5, 12, and 18 to 23. And don't forget our Arctic themed scavenger hunt which will take you all around the Aquarium on your quest for the answers. Get them all right and enter them in our ballot box for your chance to win a wetlab session and a beluga encounter!

Lastly, a traditional holiday favourite has been brought back to the Aquarium by popular demand – the lighting of our electric eel Christmas tree! Witness the sparkle and lights of a special Christmas tree that our electric eel helps light through electricity generated when it feeds.

***How does the electric eel light the Christmas tree?*** Some fishes, such as the electric eel, live in dark and murky waters, so they generate electric fields to be able to see what is around them. Electric eels have electric organs made up of modified muscle or nerve cells that are specialized for producing electric fields and strong currents. Since its head has a positive charge and its tail negative, this polarity gives it an electrical field which it uses to find prey and navigate around objects. When these electric eels produce electricity into the water, especially when they feed, the electrodes in this exhibit pick up the electrical discharges to help light the Christmas tree. Now that's electrifying! See it for yourself when you visit the Aquarium this holiday season.

*Magic of the North* is on now until January 3. Learn more at [visitvanaqua.org](http://visitvanaqua.org).

### **About Vancouver Aquarium**

The Vancouver Aquarium is a global leader in connecting people to our natural world, and a self-supporting, non-profit association dedicated to effecting the conservation of aquatic life through display and interpretation, education, research, and direct action. Learn more at [www.vanaqua.org](http://www.vanaqua.org).

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