Steve Huskey/Shark Expert

VFTH

7/25/13

Why would an international film crew, shooting a special on sharks, come to WKU’s campus?

Amy Bingham explains in this week’s View from the Hill.

WKU Biology professor Steve Huskey is no stranger to TV. He’s already appeared in several National Geographic specials. This time he’s assessing bite damage caused by Tiger sharks, Bull Sharks and of course, great white sharks.

It’s the film that made everyone afraid to go in the water. But the 1975 blockbuster Jaws was based on events that happened decades earlier.

was the true Jaws event that sparked Benchley’s book and Speilberg’s movie so we’re creeping up on the 100 year anniversary of what was the real Jaws sequence.”

A more recent spike in shark attacks off the coast of Western Australia is the inspiration for an upcoming NOVA special called “The Real Jaws.”

 “We’re looking at why shark bites occur and the science behind it.”

That’s where WKU comes in. Biology professor Dr. Steve Huskey and Dr. Chris Byrne in the department of Engineering are using technology to assess shark bite damage.

 “Our story is to try and help people understand bite force isn’t true story. It’s all about the razor sharp edge that make it bite pressure.”

 “The lab here at Western Kentucky is perfect with machines here that measure the force of penetration of a surfboard.”

The film crew is in the middle of a five week shoot that has taken them from Australia to Cape Cod. Dr. Huskey says the stop here in Bowling Green is big plus for WKU.

 “You can talk about how cool shark teeth are but if you pass one around and see their face and watch shows about how sharks employ those teeth to catch and kill stuff and I can say how it works and I’m part of the project, everyone benefits.”

The NOVA special called The Real Jaws is expected to air sometime next spring. With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.

###