

NOAA Teacher at Sea
Kimberly Pratt
Onboard NOAA Ship MCARTHUR II
July 5 – 24, 2005

Interview 4

Interview with the Commanding Officer

Today, I met with LCDR Daniel Morris on the McARTHUR II. Morris is one of 270 uniformed officers of the NOAA Corps. His assignment is varied with 2 years of duty on a ship and 3 years at shore. Morris' background is in the Navy, where he attended the Naval Academy, and was promoted from Ensign to Lt. Jr. Grade, to Lt. Upon leaving the Navy, after some time he joined the NOAA Corps. In NOAA he again started as an Ensign, Lt. Jr. Grade, Lt. Commander and now is a Lt. Commander. In August, Dan will be completing this tour of ship duty and will then be posted at NOAA headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland. While on board the McARTHUR II, Morris is responsible for all the operations on the ship, and the safety of personnel on board. One of his challenges as Commanding Officer is to make the ship a better place to work and live. Morris is on-call at all times aboard the McARTHUR II. He is consulted with navigation questions and vessel traffic situations. During his down time he likes to ride his stationary bike and read. He keeps in contact with his wife who he met while he was a sailing instructor in the Navy and two daughters who live in Gloucester, Massachusetts via e-mail. In the past, Dan has sailed the original McARTHUR, and the FERREL. A port of call that he really enjoyed was in Panama, where he spent time with a friend whose backyard was in a rainforest. He describes life on board a ship like a very small city, and close attachments are made. All personnel who have experienced storms and challenging situations work harder together and become closer. There are 22 people who work together to run the ship, and Morris, admires the crew who work onboard a ship year in and year out. Morris also believes that educating others about sea life is important as he's done outreach and worked with teachers to give them reports and pictures from sea to share with their students. His advice for anyone wanting a career in maritime is to learn the skills you need for working on board a ship. He also stresses the importance of learning the Maritime traditions, and getting a mentor to help you to get the most out of a maritime career.

