



NOAA Teacher at Sea
Jeff Lawrence
Onboard NOAA Ship RAINIER
May 22 – June 2, 2006

Mission: Hydrography
Day 6: Saturday, May 27, 2006

Weather data from bridge as of 0730 hours:

Visibility: Fog 0.0 miles
Wind direction: 310 deg. NW
Wind Speed: 8 knots
Sea level pressure: 1011 mb
Present weather: Very foggy with small swells
Temperature: 46 deg. wet/dry 46 deg.

Science and Technology Log

Yesterday I was invited out on a boat launch with LTJG Abigail Higgins, Junior Survey Tech Tonya Watson, and Deck Utility Man Kenneth Keys. We were sent out to set a couple of buoys to mark locations where divers from the RAINIER could go down later in the day and take a closer look at some peculiar features from the sonar soundings. We also had to run a couple of survey lines around an object near Petersburg Harbor on something peculiar Captain Guy Noll had spotted in the sonar record. I was able to pilot the launch for part of the trip and DU Keys gave me a quick course on navigation around marked points in the Wrangell Narrows. This was really cool! LTJG Higgins showed me how the boat collects data to take back to the RAINIER where it is processed to be used on navigation charts.

When on a boat launch you may have to take lunch with you because you will not be back to the RAINIER in time for lunch. The skies were clear and full of intense Alaskan sunshine, which makes it feel warmer than the actual temperature outside. It was a beautiful day enjoyed even the more by having lunch on the boat.



Launch boat in action in Wrangell Narrows

When the launch boat returns to the RAINIER the data is downloaded to the ships computers where it is processed so that charts and graphs can be made or updated. Below physical scientist Shyla Allen from the Pacific Hydrographic Branch assist ENS Laurel Jennings in making plans for running lines at the next stop near Sitka. ENS Jennings is in her first year on the RAINIER and a part of the NOAA officer corps aboard the RAINIER.



Crunching the numbers are: Shyla Allen (back) and ENS Laurel Jennings (front)

Personal Log

Today was an absolutely beautiful day in SE Alaska. I really enjoyed working with the survey technicians and people aboard the RAINIER. I have learned much more than I thought ever existed when comes to navigating the waters, coastlines, and harbors of Alaska. Today we are traveling to Biorka Island, which is northwest of where we were the previous week.

Questions of the Day

When approaching a green buoy from sea in a channel in North America which side should your boat approach on?

When approaching a red buoy from sea in a channel in North America which side should your boat approach on?

Assignment

Plot a course if you were the pilot of the RAINIER that you would follow from Wrangell Narrows near Petersburg to Biorka Island.

Jeff Lawrence