



**NOAA Teacher at Sea
Kimberly Wolke
Onboard NOAA ship RAINIER
July 24-August 11, 2006**

Mission: Hydrographic Surveys of the Shumagin Islands, Alaska

Day: Monday, July 24, 2006

Personal Log

Right after breakfast this morning we had a safety demonstration by the Deck Utilityman Kenneth Keys. The five of us who are the “newbies” on the RAINIER for this leg had to be issued a life vest, a float jacket, and an immersion suit, otherwise known as a “gummy suit”. Of course, it’s not enough to just have

this safety equipment, we also needed to put it on. The immersion suit was quite an experience to say the least.



TAS Kim Wolke in her immersion suit during safety training.

By 1600 hours today we were departing Kodiak Island to begin our cruise to the Shumagin Islands. As we were leaving the dock, I stood on the fly bridge to observe the deckhands at work. It’s quite an undertaking to depart port. There’s definitely a lot of teamwork involved. As we were making our way into Chiniak Bay, I stood on the port side of the ship (which is the left side) talking with ENS Sam Greenaway. He pointed out to me the red buoys that we were passing which were on the port side of the ship. The buoys basically serve as a guide for the ship in areas where they may be shallow waters such as the channel we were passing through. In the United States, as a ship is leaving, the red buoys should stay on the port side. If we were returning, the red buoys would be on the starboard (right) side of the ship.



Deckhands at work as NOAA ship RAINIER departs Kodiak Island.

As we started getting into a bit rougher water, I really started feeling the pitching and rolling of the ship. The pitch is the forward to backward movement and the rolling is the side-to-side movement. Many of the crewmembers had taken some medication earlier to avoid seasickness. I was not one of them. Gradually I became dizzier and dizzier and started to feel nauseous. I stood on the bridge for a bit and watched the horizon before I finally found an empty couch and just laid down. The bridge is the part of the ship where the ship's navigational controls and other essential equipment related to ship operations are

located and operated. Hopefully I develop my “sea legs” and I can avoid taking any of the seasickness medication.

Tomorrow we’re supposed to begin doing some ship hydrography which means that all of the work that will be done will be from the ship itself and not from the smaller launch boats that are also used. I’m excited to see how all of the cool technology works.

Kim Wolke
Teacher at Sea