



## NOAA Teacher at Sea Jessica Schwarz Onboard NOAA Ship RAINIER June 19 – July 1, 2006

### NOAA Teacher at Sea: Jessica Schwarz

NOAA Ship RAINIER  
Mission: Hydrographic Surveys  
Day 7: Sunday, June 25, 2006

#### Science and Technology Log

Today the RAINIER moved yet again. At around 2:00 this afternoon, while I was working away in the plotting room we lifted anchor and got underway.

I learned today the anchor lengths are measured in units called “shots”, with 90 feet in one shot. As the anchor was being lifted, you could hear Boatswain Group Leader (BGL) Steve Foye calling out shot lengths over the radio. This was to let the crew in the bridge know how much anchor chain was left before the ship



From the bridge, ENS Olivia Hauser radios to survey launches RA4 and RA5 to let them know RAINIER is underway.



RAINIER deck crew looking over the side of the ship to watch the anchor as it is being lifted out of the water. Communication from the deck to the bridge on the location of the anchor relative to the ship's position is important to prevent damage of the ship's hull.

was no longer be secured to ground. ENS Meghan McGovern mentioned that the anchor chain is generally let out 5-7 times the depth of the water, leaving plenty of slack for the ship to rotate on anchor.

Two survey boats were still in the field when RAINIER got underway today. I think it's pretty amazing they can load the boats onto the ship while we're moving! According to the crew it's easier to load them while we're moving than when we're at anchor. ENS Olivia Hauser radioed the launches to let them know to get ready for pick-up. We're now anchored in Kanga

Bay again and the weather has been beautiful!

Tonight I had the opportunity to chat with some of the NOAA Commissioned Officers on



NOAA Commissioned Officers: ENS Nate Eldridge, ENS Meghan McGovern, and ENS Sam Greenaway.

the bridge, ENS Megan McGovern, ENS Nate Eldridge, and ENS Sam Greenaway. I wondered how they got involved in NOAA Corps in the first place. All three of them received a Bachelors of Science prior to applying to NOAA Corps. One of the minimum requirements to apply for the Corps is a bachelor's degree in science, engineering, or mathematics. Once admitted, the officers head to the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point in New York for NOAA Basic Officer Training Class, a rigorous three-month training period. Upon completion of BOTC, the NOAA Corps officers are placed

on NOAA vessels sailing throughout the world. They commit to a 2-2 ½ year tour aboard the ship to which they are assigned.

The officers, always in uniform, are responsible for running the ship, and are also hydrographic surveyors onboard RAINIER. They work on a rotating schedule, including anchor watch, survey launch, and cleaning and processing data. It seems to me that they're always working. Then again, that's how it seems with all the crew working onboard the RAINIER.

Check out the NOAA Corps web site if you're interested:

<http://www.noaacorps.noaa.gov>

### **Personal Log**

It's Sunday today! Physical Scientist Shyla Allen asked me today what I would typically be doing on a Sunday. I told her, I'd be at the beach, going for a swim or snorkel! It's funny how different my Sundays are in Alaska on RAINIER. It doesn't really feel like a Sunday because everyone is still hard at work. Today I wrote my log, responded to e-mail, and visited with crew. Pretty fabulous Sunday, really. Not too much activity, at least not for me anyways, which is just how I prefer to spend Sunday.

I'll write again tomorrow-

Jessica Schwarz

**Calling All Middle Schoolers-We Need Help Answering a Few Questions!**

This question comes from the Navigation Officer onboard RAINIER, ENS Sam Greenaway.

If there are 6ft in 1 fathom, in 15 fathoms of water, how many shots of anchor chain would be let out when the anchor just touches the ocean floor?

Also, in 15 fathoms of water, how much additional chain would typically be let out to provide slack for the RAINIER to swing on anchor?