



**NOAA Teacher at Sea  
Christy Garvin  
Onboard NOAA Ship RAINIER  
June 1 - 8, 2005**

**Log 8**

Day 8: Wednesday, June 8, 2005  
Latitude: 56 deg 44 min N  
Longitude: 135 deg 43 min W  
Visibility: 10 nautical miles  
Wind Direction: 160 deg  
Wind Speed: 14 kts  
Sea Wave Height: 1-2 ft  
Swell Wave Height: 4-5 ft  
Sea Water Temperature: 53 deg F  
Sea Level Pressure: 1011.5 mb



**Science and Technology Log**

Since we were doing ship's hydro again today, I decided to take the opportunity to interview some of the NOAA junior officers to learn more about what their job entails and what long-term life at sea is like. The two officers on watch were Briana Welton and Jay Lomnicky.

Briana attended Smith College in western Massachusetts; she majored in math, but learned about NOAA through the science department at Smith. While in college, she interned for NOAA and enjoyed the experience. She graduated from college and found that her job working in a cubicle was boring and tedious; looking for adventure and a different style of life, she applied with NOAA and became a junior officer. She has been onboard the RAINIER for almost two years, and while onboard she has worked in the survey department, been in charge of tide information for the ship, and stood anchor watch on the bridge. Briana will be leaving the ship in December for her three-year shore duty. Her shore assignment will be with a Navigation Response team that will do surveys in the mid-Atlantic region.

Jay learned of NOAA from a friend who was working for a fish and wildlife agency in Florida. He has a degree in biology and has been on the ship for two and a half years. His collateral duty is dive master, and he is in charge of all dive operations on the ship. There are eight certified divers onboard who set up tide gauges, complete hull inspections, and use lift bags to recover items from the ocean floor. It is Jay's job to plan all dives, ensure that the nearest decompression chamber is operational, check to make

sure the equipment is working properly, and assess diver's skills. When Jay leaves the RAINIER in about a month for his shore duty, he will be working with side scan sonar looking for fish habitats. Jay really enjoys ship life; he likes steering the ship, the adrenaline rush of rough weather, and managing and coordinating the activities of those on board.

Both Jay and Briana had advice for those seeking a career with NOAA. First, they encouraged a math or science degree and suggested that basic seamanship (tying knots, navigation, life at sea) and knowledge of the ocean would be helpful. They also suggested that individuals should understand that working on a ship is not a job, it is a lifestyle. Sometimes it is difficult to have relationships or hobbies, and many conveniences like radio, television, and private quarters are often not available.

### **Personal Log**



While the ship was doing hydro today, I saw two humpback whales breaching. They would bring their large pectoral fins high in the air and slap them down on the water, then they would do a tail lob, which is when they bring the fluke up in the air and flip it around. It was definitely an amazing sight.

Until tomorrow,

Christy