



**NOAA Teacher at Sea
Karen Meyers & Alexa Carey
Onboard NOAA Ship ALBATROSS IV
August 14 – September 1, 2006**

NOAA Teacher at Sea: Karen Meyers

NOAA Ship ALBATROSS IV

Mission: Eco-Monitoring

Day 11: August 24, 2006

Atlantic Ocean

Weather Data from Bridge

Visibility: 12 nautical miles

Wind direction 90°

Wind speed: 12-13 kts

Sea wave height 2'

Swell wave height 3-4'

Seawater temperature 20.4C

Sea Level Pressure: 1018 mb

Cloud cover: 4/8

Science and Technology Log

We're finally on the famous George's Bank. It's been a busy day – we had 7 stations on our watch, including 2 EPA stations. It's a lovely day, a little chilly, with a brisk wind.

I asked Jerry earlier in the cruise why George's Bank has historically been such a productive area for fisheries. He explained that, first of all, it's shallow so fish can spawn there and sunlight can penetrate the water column, providing energy for phytoplankton. Steve said he's seen a picture from the 1900's of guys playing baseball on the shoals in the middle of the Bank. Secondly, there's a gyre-like water movement, probably resulting from the Labrador Current meeting the Gulf Stream, so it's rich in nutrients and the fish that hatch there tend to be kept there by the current. I've also heard about the "Hague Line" that was established by the International Court in the Hague to divide George's Bank between Canada and the U.S. Steve talked about how fisherman fish right along it. It's great to get the perspectives of someone like Jerry whose views are those of a scientist well versed in fish and fisheries and Steve who has a wealth of knowledge from fishing this area.

I had a nice visit on the bridge this morning with Acting CO Kurt Zegowitz and Ensign Chad Meckley. Chad told me that the ALBATROSS IV doesn't have a rudder – it's steered by something called a Kort Nozzle which is essentially a large metal open-ended cylinder around the propeller. When it is turned, it directs the outwash which makes the ship turn. Jerry suggested that it may be better for fishing boats because the nets sometimes get caught on a rudder. However, this ship is not as maneuverable as it would be with a rudder.

I also got some more information on life in the NOAA Corps. It seems like a pretty attractive job for a young person. Kurt spent his first sea duty in Hawaii and had a wonderful experience. Chad is thinking about what kind of billet he hopes to be assigned to for his shore duty, which will come after the ALBATROSS IV is decommissioned. Kurt showed me a list of NOAA Corps billets – both at sea and on land and a list of the individuals in the Corps and where they are currently stationed. I was pleased to see how many women are in the Corps.

Personal Log – Alexa Carey (Aug 25.)

I've become good friends with my new watch-mates; we have a lot of fun together. From after-shift meetings at 3 a.m. to 'Cake Breaks,' Alicea, Wes, Tracy and I have really come together as a team. I've never been too fond of group projects, most of the time because it leads to one person doing all of the work. However, our shift has selected specific job roles that we trade off to ease the constant work load and maximize efficiency.

I've been talking to a wide variety of people through email, from my science teacher to friends from ISEF to family abroad. I'm hoping to have a new puppy waiting at home when I get there. We used to have a Keeshond (Dutch Barge dog) named Dutch. I'm hoping for a Tervuren or Husky, but it's ultimately up to my parents because he/she will stay with them when I head over to school. I encourage anyone I know who has a dog to watch the *Dog Whisperer w/ Cesar Milan* (Animal planet).

I've only been up since 11 a.m. (we go to bed after 3 a.m.) so not much has occurred today. Both shifts will be getting hit with stations rapidly today. We might have close to 8 stations in just a single shift. Still no whale sightings, but we're not giving up hope. Last night, a sea of fish rode next to us on the boat. These fish (juveniles about 8 inches long), would jump about 3 feet out and across the water. It was pretty neat. I'm going to get lunch and start piling on my gear.

Personal Log – Karen Meyers

I can't believe how comfortable I feel aboard ship now. At first I was at loose ends about how to fill the free time, especially since it comes in chunks of unpredictable length. But now, between writing logs, writing emails, working on the photo contest, making up a Power Point on my experience as a NOAA Teacher at Sea, talking to people on board, and trying to spend some time on the bridge or the hurricane deck watching for whales, the day just zips by.