

## Day 4: July 20, 2010

Day 3 is hard to describe. It started out with a morning of sailing into New York City ultimately stopping at South Street seaport though we did not dock. Iain got in the zodiac and was dropped off. As we sailed into New York we went under the bridges we often drive over. The triboro bridge, the throgs neck bridge, the Queensboro bridge and each time you would swear the mast would not make it and each time it cleared by 30 or more feet. We were one of only a few boats on the water and it was remarkable to think that 50 years ago or so this would have been a bustling route. The shore was a complicated mix of famous buildings, expensive condos, dilapidated buildings and industry. We passed Rikers Island where I suggested to Iain we might drop him off. He readily agreed until he realized what it was. It was noted that my shirt and shorts caused me to match the floating prison and so they could not help but shoot a few photos. The science team huddled together on the bow squeezed into the furthest point forward on the bow. Hopefully, James posted some photos of them on our "A Race to Save Our Oceans" Facebook page.

With our training done, it was time to say goodbye to Iain. We dropped him off at South Street Seaport and headed down towards Lady Liberty. We will miss Iain as he is always excellent company (though no one should tell him I said so). He left us with a clear mission and clear understanding of the trials and tribulations ahead.

Lady Liberty was spectacular. Beautiful as always. I think I will leave that there.

Next, up was a stop in New Jersey. We needed some propane for our stove/oven and were running low. So we anchored near a marina and sent Rick in to get it. We also took that opportunity to send them in with our trash (as that really accumulates on a boat) and with a request for additional foodstuffs as we will not see land for another 10 days. That took a while and it was hot.

Captain Bob took advantage of the time to perform routine maintenance on the engine. Eric (last name Carr by the way) caught up on some odds and ends like finishing fixing a few of the lee cloths. These are canvas clothes that keep us from rolling out of bed in rough weather. They affix to the ceiling and then you unhook them when you wake up. Kyle cooked. 7 boxes of macaroni and cheese to make dinner, an experiment to figure out what was needed to feed this hungry crew.

The science team caught up on odds and ends too. Johnny and Cathy affixed the cell platforms to the incubator shelves as we are anticipating much rougher seas and don't want them falling out. Matt prepped samples so of which we sent with Iain. Kellie prepared duty rosters. They also took some time to relax and read as tomorrow the sunrise to sunset watches return for 10 straight days. Me. I spent time writing and catching up on email, phone calls and planning etc. There seems to be puzzles and challenges for me each day.

The water quality off New Jersey was quite disappointing, brown. There were lots of jellyfish and terns flying around (the jellyfish of course were floating). I decided we should start recording all the wildlife we see to make our trackline map more interesting for folks to read. I am now working on those data sheets.

I ate dinner on the aft deck. Captain Bob. Engineer Rick and Cathy joined me. Bob is quite the conversationalist and we chatted about a number of things. The food was simple but good. Kyle does a good job and puts a lot of TLC into it which we all appreciate.

Then it was time to go. For experience, we hauled the anchor as a team by hand. Quite heavy I must say. But we all heaved and hoed and up it came with some struggle. Off we went headed for the Atlantic. The Captain Bob presented me with a decision to make. Do we sail along the NJ coast and then cut over to deep water or do we head for deep water and go to deep water and head down.

I chose to head for deep water so we will head out to the Hudson Canyon dropoff and head south from there. I chose this route as we have never been there and since the whale are rarely seen off NJ, perhaps they are there. Plus it's just my nature to try the untried direction. We should be out there at daybreak just in time to start the watches.

Before I left I thought today would be the beginning of the time for me to settle in. It is clear to me now that I will not be settled until the voyage is done. In addition to the myriad of decisions I must make each day both big and small, the Gulf weighs heavily on my mind. I find myself thinking through all possible variables, checking and recheck protocols and equipment, trying to imagine all of the hurdles the oil and the heat will present. I know I cannot discern all of the challenges until we get there, but the safety of my team (and I include the Captain and crew in this comment) and the safety of the ship are my constant worry.

The Gulf also weighs on my mind because of the devastation this crisis will cause. I am still stunned as what we as a society have done to ourselves and our ecosystem. I am dismayed that so many consider it just another accident and call for the resumption of oil while still others exclaim that it is only oil and what is the big deal. At times I wonder if I am missing something and yet I can find no flaw in my logic- the crisis is real and the consequences severe. I am proud that we, all of us, are able to do our part and tell the story of the Gulf crisis from the whales point of view and what it is doing to their cells and their DNA. At least then maybe we will learn some lessons.

John