

Day 50: September 4, 2010

Time to go to sea again. That means lots of last minute errands. Saying goodbye to the excellent people we have met and picking up arriving crew. Engineer Rick has returned from his brief break. We are pleased to have him back and it was good to catch up. Carolyne LaCerte arrived from my lab. Carolyne actually came to work in our lab in 2005 as an Ocean Alliance intern and then eventually earned a Masters with me from USM and is now one of my excellent doctoral students. You may remember a few emails back that she just passed her comprehensive exams. She is always smiling and a bundle of joy and energy and curiosity. I am looking forward to her company over the coming days.

In the morning, Alexandra Cousteau and her team came to finish up some filming and for a final visit. Cathy managed to stay long enough to see her again and have a brief chat. The film session was again a lot of fun with both a lot of laughter and also serious discussion and question and answers. You should know that it not just Alexandra that peppers you with interesting and challenging questions, but all of her team will challenge you too. It nice to work with such engaged folks. I had a discussion with one of her photographers later who described the job as engaging work traveling to new places and meeting interesting people- much like we are finding our voyage. By late morning the work was done and they had to move on to their next obligation. We said our goodbyes- Johnny gave Alexandra one of his signature hugs- and parted company. We do hope we see them again soon just for the pleasant and relaxed company and to share more stories. Although we will not fully part company as their camera man Ian will join us for the next several days.

The rest of the day was filled with all the necessary work we had to do to get out. At about 9 pm we said goodbye to our neighbor Sid, a remarkably friendly and generous man who performed more acts of kindness towards us than I could list. But the best part of our time with Sid was his warm and uplifting company. We had a team meeting, pushed off the dock and ate Sandy's excellent dinner. And with that we were off to sea.

So let me remind you of our current team: Ethan is an acoustics expert from Scripps Oceanographic Institute. Mario is a communications person from Scripps and will be doing a story on our interactions with Scripps. Ian is the cameraman for Alexandra. They will be on until Wednesday when we will drop them off in Venice Louisiana. We have Captain Bob, First Mate Ian, Engineer Rick, and Sandy on both science team and cook, Johnny, Matt, Carolyne and I. Every bunk is full.

Our first task tomorrow will be to service the Scripps HARP buoy that they put in the water to listen to marine mammals. Then we will resume our search for whales.

It's quite an exciting time!

John