



HLY0802: March 29-May 6, 2008

Chief Scientist's Log

April 27: Barbecue at Sea

Post by Carin Ashjian

We have finally left the open water and are headed north again, into the ice. The ship has the familiar bumping and thumping as we go through the ice. At first, the ice was pancakes but now it is a thin layer. We have chosen a region of thin ice, based on the ice imagery from satellites, through which to traverse so that we can make good speed. It is snowing and the thin ice is coated with a white layer of snow. Hard to believe that it is snowing on April 27 but I guess this is typical for the Bering Sea. I've been receiving messages about flowering trees back home and this is a far cry from that! Above: A view of the ice as we first crossed through the ice edge today. The ice was very broken up there.

The bridge is very quiet tonight. The drivers of the ship are up in the aloft con, on the top of the "mast" of the ship where they can get better visibility to choose their path through the ice. The scientists are quite quiet this evening too, taking advantage of the break in the action to catch up on rest and probably movies.

Yesterday we recovered the sediment traps successfully after their third deployment. Pat Kelly was very happy to have them back on board again because the traps had remained in a very small region, going in a circle, during the 24 hours that they were out. We were afraid something had gone amiss, such as grounding of the traps on the seafloor or a more catastrophic loss of the string of traps, but it turns out they must have been caught in some kind of tidal ellipse that kept them essentially at the same spot.

Many of the tubes that were deployed at shallow depths had numerous large copepods in them. The zooplankton ecologists were very excited to see them. Pat, however, was not since who knows what havoc those copepods may have been up to inside the trap (such as eating the falling material that is being collected by the trap!).

Today we had a barbecue in the helicopter hangar! It was quite amusing to see the crew and scientists perched around the hangar, enjoying their burgers and hot dogs while the helicopter rested peacefully nearby. It was a nice change to have a barbecue rather than eating inside again.

We are heading north to start our sampling at the northern end of our work region. Tomorrow I hope (weather permitting) to fly to Gambell, a village on the island of St. Lawrence, to visit with the people there and explain our research. Then we will start working our way south towards the end of the cruise.