



HLY0802: March 29-May 6, 2008

Chief Scientist's Log

May 3: Heading South

Post by Carin Ashjian

The ship is still hitting ice. We are moving to the south, nearing the ice edge and the last time that we will leave the ice. The ice is much thinner now, and darker, because the snow is gone from the top and the ice is melting. Healy is still thumping floes, shuddering with that familiar rumble as we pass through the pancakes of ice. I know this is our last few hours in the ice and I relishing every moment. I keep running up to the bridge to look out and see the constantly changing landscape of floes.

Our work is almost done. Most of the scientists have packed it in since the time until we reach Dutch Harbor is too short both to finish experiments and to get everything cleaned, organized, and in boxes, ready to go. Only a few teams still work, including the intrepid CTD (conductivity-temperature-depth) team who can work until the bitter end. I have a busy schedule planned for them for the next few days!

The labs are buzzing with busy scientists washing equipment and packing it up. We have dismantled our on-deck incubator and will stow it in its crate tomorrow morning, working along with the other teams of scientists using incubators (and the Marine Science Technicians who will help us). Monday is forecast for 10-foot seas so we want to make sure that we get all the heavy outside work done before then.

At 1230 today, the scientists all attended "quarters." This is when the crew gets together to coordinate and pass announcements. Today was a special quarters as it was an awards day. Several CG members with whom we work received awards for their support of science on *Healy*. In addition, the crew was awarded the Arctic Service Medal for conducting work above 60 degrees for 21 days during the winter (before May 1).

Eight members of the science party also received Arctic Service Medals, since they had been on board for the requisite period (they were on *Healy* for the cruise before ours). Liz Labunski, one of the eight, was awarded the medal on behalf of the qualifying scientists. Now, if we had only moved that MN line 0.1 degrees to the north ...

We have two more days until Dutch Harbor and they will be busy ones as we frantically pack up and clean the labs and our rooms. It is bittersweet, just like leaving the ice. Healy has been our home for the past 5 weeks, a place where life is simpler because it is more focused, and the complexity of the real world does not intrude.