

North Kingstown *View*

August 2016

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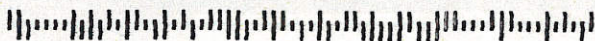
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Science at Night and Other Unexpected Surprises at Sea

By Sandra Makielski, 7th grade teacher at Davisville Middle School

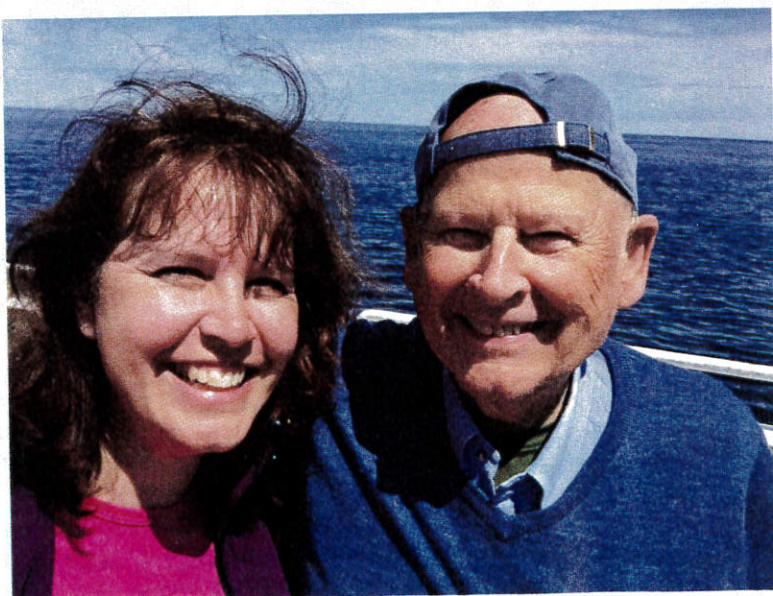
Four classroom teachers, a group of scientists, graduate students and crew, set sail for Georges Bank on the research vessel *Endeavor* on May 19. The 185-foot ship is owned by the National Science Foundation and managed by the Graduate School of Oceanography at the University of Rhode Island.

I had the honor of working and living on the research vessel *Endeavor*. This 40-year-old ship allows for scientists from around the country to conduct experiments in our planet's oceans and seas. We departed from the Bay Campus for a five-day adventure.

I had applied and been chosen by the Rhode Island Teacher-at-Sea program to assist a group of scientists in their experiments. Being only the third teacher from North Kingstown to be chosen and a seventh-grade social studies teacher prone to motion sickness at that, I had to calm my nerves as I tentatively crossed the gangplank.



LEARNING NEW SKILLS: Classroom teachers S. McCarthy, D. Reed, S. Makielski, and J. Unsworth pose on the fantail of the *Endeavor*. They are taking part in the Rhode Island Teacher-at-Sea program to assist a group of scientists with their experiments.



MEETING NEW FRIENDS: Sandra Makielski takes a selfie with award-winning Professor of Oceanography Tom Rossby while aboard the research vessel *Endeavor*. He and the others tested acoustic fishtag technology on this trip.

Once on board, I quickly explored the fantail, the main lab, the two smaller labs, the galley and the lounge area. The crew was quick to introduce themselves and not long after we left Narragansett Bay.

The classroom teachers and graduate students were put to work assisting one of the five scientists on the cruise. Working with Chris Kincaid, professor of oceanography, we helped to build and release drifters that were used to study the connection of ocean currents between Georges Bank and Rhode Island's coastal waters. After lunch, we set to work assisting award-winning Professor of Oceanography Tom Rossby, as he and others prepared to test acoustic fishtag technology.

I knew in advance that we would be assisting the five scientists on board, but I was not prepared for the amount of work that had to be done at night. The old adage

of "time is money" held true on this journey because we did not have the luxury of waiting until daylight to complete the many experiments and tasks that had been planned for this voyage.

We spent our first night attaching fishtags to a mooring that was dropped off the fantail at about 2am,

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18 hours from Rhode Island. I sneaked in a few hours of sleep, but my bleary eyes were still in awe of all the activity and science that happened the first night and each night after.

Comfortable! Snug! Practical! Enlightening! So many words to describe life onboard this magnificent ship. Surprisingly, I found my berth to be quite cozy with bunkbeds and a private toilet and shower. The galley created meals fit for a king and the lounge was equipped with extensive book and video libraries.

The quiet moments allowed me to connect with my students back at Davisville Middle School through Instagram and my blog. Not only did I learn about New England's waters, I connected with dynamic individuals and made new friends—all while eating the most delicious food and being rocked to sleep each night. And the best surprise of all: I did not get motion sick courtesy of Bonine!

For more information, visit <http://footstepsacrosstheplanet.blogspot.com/>

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