



# TOPSIDE



NOAA Diving Program News - November 2007

## 10th Anniversary

This issue of our newsletter marks its 10th Anniversary! The inaugural issue was distributed in October, 1997. As originally conceived, TOPSIDE was to be a forum for NOAA divers and diving supervisors to share information on upcoming events, clarification of NDP standards and procedures, and current diving operations throughout the agency. We would like to return to that spirit. So, as of this issue, contact information and training reminders will disappear. This information can be obtained by other means. Instead, we plan to share more stories about what is going on in the field. We will also bring you interesting news from the Dive Center. With 489 divers and 86 diving units in NOAA, there are many interesting short and long-term projects underway. We are getting some great work done! Everyone's got a good story or project. Will you share one for a future issue? Short articles (<300 words) and small photos are welcome in any format. Original authors will receive full credit. I hope to hear from you and look forward to sending out the news.

~LT Sean Cimilluca

## NOAA Ship NANCY FOSTER in FKNMS



NOAA Ship NANCY FOSTER recently collaborated with scientists from the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary and the National Undersea Research Center to create a one-meter resolution image of the NOAA Aquarius underwater habitat and the Conch Reef area that surrounds it. Before NANCY FOSTER maneuvered over Aquarius, divers performed reconnaissance dives to ensure the area was clear of lines and obstructions.

*Ed. Note: While they were at it, they celebrated NOAA's 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary*

~LT Sarah Mrozek

## "BLAST" FROM THE PAST

The following article is a reprint from our first edition. It comes from Willie Amaro, a former Divemaster on NOAA Ship ALBATROSS IV, describing a technique he developed for clearing a saltwater intake pipe that was fouled with mussel growth

"The A-4 has a high and low water intake that leads down into the engine room. Upon inspection of the lower intake I found little mussel growth. When I inspected the high intake I found that the grating was clean but the 12-inch pipe behind the grate was almost totally closed due to mussel growth. This intake is about 10 ft below the water line so I knew that this was not going to be an easy job. After removal of the intake grating, (with pneumatic tools), we closed off the lower intake by u-bolting a plywood patch through the grating. We then contracted the local "Roto-Rooter" service with a high-pressure (4500psi) water jet/snake machine. The water jet nozzle has two forward facing jets and six facing aft. The forward jets are designed to break up the clog while the aft jets propelled the snake forward and wash out debris."

"Prior to entering the water, I placed a red mark 8 ft from the end of the nozzle, since I wanted to know when the tip was close at hand. We then took the snake down and put it in the pipe. We fed the snake into the pipe by hand and initially, it would only go in about 4 feet. The machine operator changed the cleaning head and we tried again, this time it went in an additional 10 ft. I pushed it forward as far as I could, then had one diver go topside to tell the operator to start the machine. You should have seen the stuff coming out, it was unbelievable, total blackout. All I could see was the lights that the other diver had fixed on the opening of the pipe."

"I guided the snake and fed it throughout the pipe, all the way across the engine room for a total of 45 ft. I then made myself negatively buoyant, put both my feet firmly on the ship's hull and started the long process of hauling back the snake, under pressure, one foot at a time. When I got to the red marker I stopped hauling and just guided the thing back down the pipe again, repeating the process six additional times. Once we were finished the pipe looked like new. The job took 8 hours over two days and saved the ship \$25-30K." K



# NOAA Ship MILLER FREEMAN



You will rarely see an U/W photo from this ship. In its working grounds, the visibility is too poor, sometimes zero. This was the case this summer during working dives on the ship's centerboard. Scientists from the Northwest Fisheries Science Center had determined that the Acoustic Doppler Current Profile was essential data for their Hake survey. While underway, we had an equipment malfunction and weren't collecting this critical data. This forced an unscheduled port call exclusively to conduct diving repair operations. With a lot of time and money on the line, ship divers hit the water shortly after we docked. Obligated to work only by hand and memory in strong tidal currents, removal of the 175 lb. transducer from the pod proved to be a challenge and required more repetitive dives than usual. However, with good planning, teamwork and topside effort, the mission was a success and the ship was again underway with minimal delay. At the next port call, the ship's crew went to work again, this time reinstalling the repaired unit for the next leg of the cruise. With 2 ft. of visibility and little current, the back half of this project went much quicker. Having a full diving complement who had experience working on the hull and maintained diving proficiency was critical to the success of this operation.

~ LT Cimilluca

## NEW WORKING DIVERS



Congratulations to the October Working Diver graduates! Back row, L to R: ENS Ron Moyers, NOAA Ship DAVID STARR JORDAN; ENS Erik Davis, NOAA Ship RAINIER; ENS Glen Rice, NOAA Ship RUDE; Christopher Mayo, NOAA Ship JOHN N. COBB, Chad Smith, National Marine Sanctuaries Program; ENS Matthew Griffin, NOAA Ship RAINIER; ENS Trey Emmons, NOAA Ship NANCY FOSTER; ENS Loren Evory, NOAA Ship RONALD H. BROWN; Second Row, L to R: ENS Kyle Byers, NOAA Ship DAVID STARR JORDAN, ENS Melody Ovard, NOAA Ship THOMAS JEFFERSON; ENS Claire Surrey, NOAA Ship DELAWARE II; ENS Faith Opatrny, NOAA Ship OSCAR DYSON; ENS Patrick Redmond, NOAA Ship FAIRWEATHER; John Buchanan, Northwest Fisheries Science Center; Stephanie Mills, NOAA Ship FAIRWEATHER; and ENS Brain Player, NOAA Ship OSCAR ELTON SETTE. 

## NEW DIVEMASTERS



Congratulations to the October Divemaster graduates! Back row, L to R: Brian Cassady, Snohomish County Police Dept; LTJG Matthew Davis, NOAA Ship MILLER FREEMAN; Jess Sanders, Snohomish County Police Dept; ENS Josh Slater, NOAA Ship MCARTHUR II; and ENS Ben LaCour, NOAA Ship KA'IMIMOANA 

*Note: Workhorse of the fleet in background*

