

Position of the MS Amsterdam;

At Sea position on Sunday 11:25 pm

Lat: 41 degrees 07.50 South

Long: 74 degrees 11.99 West

Greetings 4th graders and Friends;

This morning at 7:00 am Don and I woke up not knowing what kind of day it would be because our room is down at the lower level where there are no windows to give any sort of indication as to what kind of day we may be encountering. Being that I'm of the optimistic type, I of course assumed it would be warm, sunny and a perfect opportunity to go walking around the track that circumnavigates the ship.

(Circumnavigate means to go completely around something) If you ride your bicycle around the block, you've just circumnavigated the block) We put on our shorts ran down the hall, opened the door and almost blew over as we stepped out into the open air. I yelled to Don, "REEF THE MAIN!" That's what sailors have to do when it's too windy! We were walking against a 28 knot wind, with the spray of water from the wake of the ship showering us! It was so funny! When we walked on the side of the ship that was facing the wind it was like walking through a cold wind storm in Wisconsin but when we rounded the bow and had the wind behind us it was like a warm, sunny day in California. What a difference your environment can be like, if you've got the wind in your face vs. behind you. Our ship moves at a speed of about 18 knots. Combine that with the 28 knots of true wind and you've got yourself a lot of wind in your face while walking on the deck! In the winter in Wis. they always give 2 temperatures. The true temperature and the wind chill temperature. Wind can sure make things COLDER!

The Captain of our ship said this was a very rough day at sea with the strong winds and swells- but on this boat, which is just over 800 feet long and a little over 100 feet wide, I feel very safe. The captain told me today that we are sailing against the Humbolt Current. The oceans on our planet are full of strong currents that move in different directions and at different depths. Some are cold and deep and some are warm and shallow. The Humbolt current is cold and deep and comes from the water that surrounds Antarctica. Just to give you an idea of how cold Antarctica is.....it's 1% land and 99% ice. Antarctica is just a little bigger than the United States. In the winter, the lowest recorded temperature in the Antarctic was -110 F. The record cold temperature ever recorded in the world was in Russia at -140. I bet you 4th graders in Wisconsin are feeling pretty lucky

that you don't live in Antarctica!

Today we saw a Blue whale. It's the largest animal to ever live. Bigger than an Elephant. Here are a few facts I learned from Bob Hoffman, the Marine Biologist on our boat.

*They grow up to 110 ft. long * Weigh up to 150 tons *Can swim 15 mph *
They are mammals meaning that they give birth to their young, breath air and produce milk for their babies. A female Blue Whale can make up to 100 gal. of milk a day and can gain up to 200 lbs a day!! They can talk to each other at distances of over 1,000 miles. Although they are very large, they eat krill-- one of the smallest animals in the ocean. Smaller than a little shrimp. A Blue whale will eat up to 4 tons of krill a day! They have a blow hole at the top of their head which allows them to breath without lifting their head out of the water. It's just like like snorkeling. When you see their spout, their exhaling. In the cold winter when you exhale, you see your breath. When a whale exhales you see a big spout of water coming out of the blowhole. You can identify the whale by the spout, body size, what they do when swimming and diving and the shape of their dorsal fin. Their flukes or tails come in all different shapes and sizes. Tails can lead to identification of individual animals. There are 2 Classes of whales:

1. Baleen-filter feeders
2. Tooth whales-have teeth

Questions;

1. Who was the first man to circumnavigate the world in a boat?
2. Do you think a whale can really sink a ship?

Tomorrow we arrive in the little fishing port of Puerto Montt, Chili.

Love to all, Susie and Don