

Beaufort Gyre Exploration Project: Dispatch 14: Detour to Barrow

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We can feel very isolated out here at sea. It's much easier to stay in touch with our families and friends these days with satellite internet and phones now available on ships, but sometimes it's easy to forget that the rest of the world is chugging along while we're out here.

But then sometimes the distance and isolation is made very poignant by the fact that we know what's going on at home, but there's very little we can do about it thousands of miles away. Yesterday we halted science activities in order to detour south to Barrow, Alaska. News had come in of the death in the family of a crew member and we turned to head in. We dropped him off around noon today and he was able to get on his flight home. Thankfully we were in a region where satellite communications were working to receive the message, and close enough to get in within a day.

We're now steaming back north to continue with our science plan. While we've been steaming we've been doing XCTDs every 20 miles which has been an opportunity to get a peek at the properties of a region where we don't typically spend any time, but mostly the break in station work has given a good chance to catch up on data entry and analyses. I'm sure that I can speak for everyone that we have all been thinking a lot about our loved ones and home during this transit.

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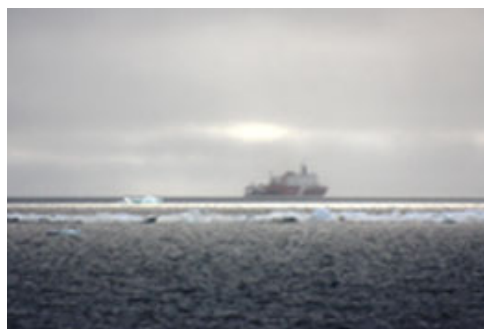
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