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Beaufort Gyre Exploration Project: Dispatch 5: Life at sea

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In many ways, living and working aboard ship is much the same as living and working on land.

We get up, have breakfast, go to work, check email, chat with co-workers, go over tasks for the day, maybe have time to hit the gym, watch a movie, read a book, listen to or even play some music, and so on. There are many, many differences, however, when doing these things on a ship.

The ship is busy and work spaces are tight; there are usually multiple jobs happening at once and quite often we are in each others' way. Everything must be secured at all times so if a box is opened and you need to go get another tool it's best if you close it and strap it back down before you leave. Since the galley is below decks and we work topside a lot, most of the time we can smell cookies baking. The ship always smells of the kitchen and we can usually guess what is for lunch well beforehand. Safety is paramount so any tools, supplies, chemicals, etc., must be handled differently here. Batteries have to be kept separately, for example. Sleeping is intersting - the bunks are pretty small and the walls are about as sound-proof as the Holiday Inn. My neighbor snores. A lot. Really loud. I'll leave it at that.

Sunday on board is a different day. I really like the tradition of Sunday here. The ship's crew all dress in a nicer uniform, the ship is a little quieter, the food better and we usually have something special. Breakfast was eggs Benedict and last night we had prime rib with Yorkshire pudding. We also had a meet 'n' greet time where we all gathered in the lounge for some wings, smoked char, a few drinks, some music, and a bit of non-work-related conversation.

We have been enjoying the 2012 Summer Olympics in London as much as time will permit. Congrats to the U.S. Women's Soccer team on winning the semi-finals. Tensions here were high as the Canadians and were leading most of the game but the U. S. team pulled it off in the end. Good luck against Japan!!

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