

Web Update

Day 10: 03/05/2008

Describe your role in the project?

Our job is to operate the remotely operated vehicle (ROV) for the scientists so that they can see and document what is on the sea floor in the areas that we have done multibeam mapping. We are responsible for getting the gear in and out of the water safely, driving the ROV to the bottom and along designated transect lines, and to keep the ROV maintained and working.

How did you start working with NOAA or other background info?

After I got out of the US Navy, I went to school at the Florida Institute of Technology to study Underwater Technology. I mainly studied hard hat, surface supply diving, but also learned about compressors, diesels, hydraulics, welding (dry and underwater), oceanography, ocean structures, and Diving Medical Technician, to name a few. After school, I soon got a job as a surface supply diver with the NOAA Undersea Research Center. We did this for about two years, but realized that there were not many scientists that wanted to use this technology to do their research and we were limited to less than 360 feet of seawater that we could work in. We got away from surface supply diving and went to scuba using nitrox gas, purchased the ROV, and leased shallow and deep manned submersibles. This new technology covered a wide variety of scientific interest, research capabilities, and allowed us to do research down to 3000 feet of seawater with the submersibles. Because of my background at college, I was given the ROV to operate and maintain, which we continue to do today..



Lance Horn: UNCW/NURC ROV Operator and Operations Director

How/why did you get involved in marine science?

I have been interested in the oceans and marine science since I was in high school. I always thought that I would like to do oceanographic research or become a forestry manager/ranger. I learned to scuba dive in 1975 when I was 19 years old and really enjoyed it. This is about the best way I can think to do what you enjoy doing and actually get paid to do it!

What do you like most about being out at sea?

Not being stuck at the office!! I'm not the kind of person that can sit behind a desk in an office all day and have to wear a tie. I get bored easily, and the variety of systems that I work with and the differing types of research really keeps me activated. Actually, I enjoy the quiet and beauty of a super clear, starry night about two hours before dawn.

If you were a reef-associated animal, what would you be and why?

I guess a Crinoid. They are feathery and not much seems to want to eat them.

What would you like readers to know about you?

My parents always told me when I was young that if I did a good job, I would be okay in the world. I've been doing this for 23 years, and there were some times when I thought maybe they were wrong because of the lack of results. However, I know now that they were right. I have earned the respect of the people that I work with, researchers from all over the United States, and make a comfortable living for me and my wife, Boo the dog, and the cats -Gateway and Bill, while doing things that I really enjoy doing.