



NEWS RELEASE

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Ocean Science Through a Photographer's Lens Topic of Sea Grant's "Oceans Alive" Presentation

Four weeks at sea on Arctic research expeditions can seem like a long time. The scenery is breathtaking but the work isn't always action-packed; in fact, it can be rather dull at times. But for Chris Linder, a photographer and research associate at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI), seeing it all through a camera lens allows him to collect two kinds of data: the scientific kind and the day-to-day, behind-the-scenes data.

With images and words, Chris Linder is a storyteller for ocean research expeditions. Linder will share some of his stories and photographs on Tuesday evening, April 25th when he presents "Freeze Frame: A Photojournalist's Experience on an Arctic Expedition," as part of Woods Hole Sea Grant's "Oceans Alive" lecture series. His presentation will begin at 7:00 p.m. and will be held in Redfield Auditorium on Water St., Woods Hole.

Linder's presentation will focus on the methodology of a research cruise—what it's like to do science in the Arctic. "I'll describe how it's done, what needs to go into planning a research cruise, and what happens when you get there and things don't go exactly as you'd planned," says Linder.

Through photographs, the audience will experience some of the unplanned events from a recent Arctic cruise, as Linder recounts a series of mechanical mishaps ranging from a broken shaft on the icebreaker to a disabled helicopter (their transport to and from the ship), and a broken Zodiac inflatable (the back-up transportation).

Linder's spectacular images of the Arctic environment capture not only the scenery, but the people working aboard the ship as scientists, technicians, and crew, as well as the process of science, including the deployment and recovery of instrumentation and equipment. He'll also share what goes into documenting a research cruise. "I'm always on the clock," says Linder of his role as a cruise photojournalist. While the research is taking place, Linder is there watching, documenting—all, he says, while striving to make sure his photographs are artistic and his narratives are written at the right level.

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Linder's affiliation with WHOI goes back to 1994 when he came to the Institution as a student, earning his master's in 1996. That was followed by a three-year stint as a Naval officer assigned to "public affairs-type duties" in Spain. While there, Linder says, he did "lots of photography and reporting," taking advantage of the scenic Straits of Gibraltar and surrounding areas. He came back to WHOI in 2000 as a research assistant to Glen Gawarkiewicz, his former advisor. Linder says he would bring his camera along on research cruises and it wasn't long before WHOI's media relations staff recognized his talent for taking high quality images that captured the essence of science at sea.

Linder credits WHOI senior scientist Bob Pickart as the first person to hire him "almost exclusively" to photograph a research expedition. "It was 80 percent photography and 20 percent science," recalls Linder. Now, Linder says, he's writing proposals and getting funded to document ocean science cruises and expeditions so that scientists "don't have to pay for my time out of research grants." The WHOI folks aren't the only ones who have been impressed by his talent: Linder's photographs and articles have appeared in numerous publications and websites, and his freelancing business is growing.

When he's not photographing research cruises or working in the Gawarkiewicz lab, Linder can be found photographing other subjects on land and near shore, or teaching photography classes for the Falmouth Artists' Guild. He has his own photography business and website, www.chrislinder.com, and has been hired to work on a book this summer, a photographer's guide to Cape Cod.

Linder received a B.S. in oceanography from the U.S. Naval Academy and a master's in ocean engineering from the MIT/WHOI Joint Program. He resides in Scituate with his wife Meghan and their dog Oscar.

Woods Hole Sea Grant's "Oceans Alive" lecture series concludes on Tuesday, May 2nd with "Student Science in Falmouth." Winners from the Falmouth Academy and Falmouth High School science fairs will present their projects at a special time, 4:00 p.m., in Redfield Auditorium. All presentations in the series are free and open to the public. Families are encouraged to attend; light refreshments will be provided. Parking for evening lectures is available in the parking lot opposite the auditorium. For the May 2nd lecture, on-street metered parking is available on a limited basis.

For more information, contact the Woods Hole Sea Grant Program, (508) 289-2398, or seagrant@whoi.edu. Professional development points are available for educators who attend the presentations.

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