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Central Pacific Edition

M/V *Mermaid Vigilance*

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## The World from Here

*A Milestone from the Radio Guys*

Last night [written March 15] I finally worked into Europe. [That means made contact with a fellow ham, in amateur radio lingo - ed.] This finishes up a "Worked all Continents" from the good ship *Mermaid Vigilance*. One would think that Antarctica might be the last one in the bag. Not this time. I had found RI1ANC at the Russian Antarctic station earlier in our expedition. Europe, however is a difficult one from here in the Central Pacific. The reason for this is that EU is due north on the great circle path. That of course takes your signal up and over the North Pole where there is a convergence of our earth's magnetic fields. These, plus any Aurora Borealis will significantly disturb the electromagnetic waves of our radio signal. Signals will often be watery or hollow sounding when this occurs.

I finally bagged HA4FF in Hungary on our "greyline" or "terminator" path. Greyline is when the sun is either rising or setting, that is, the sky is not full daylight and not fully night. At these two times per day there are opportunities for having better signals along these paths. This phenomena is caused by the very rapid ionization or de-ionization of the ionosphere. When the greyline for two stations is in good alignment, there is an opportunity to have communications between the two stations which might not occur otherwise. On the lower frequency bands these openings may be only seconds to maybe 15 minutes long! Yes, talk fast!

Another milestone we reached with this station is 25 countries. In our amateur radio world some of these "countries" are entities that belong to other countries, but are separated by at least 250 km. There are other rules established for what determines an entity that I won't bore you with here. So Hawaii and Alaska are

counted as separate "countries." Another example is the far reaches of the island nation of Kiribati. The country's islands stretch over 2,000 miles. There are West, Central, and Eastern Kiribati entities that are surrounding us here near Howland Island. These were the former British Phoenix, Caroline, and Line island groups. Each group counts as a separate entity.

Some of the more exotic of the countries contacted are: Macao, Ghana, Namibia, Pitcairn Island (of Mutiny on the Bounty fame), Austral Islands, Tonga, Temotu province, San Andres Island, and Nepal. You may wish to google these locations. Radio is good for your geography!

— Tom Vinson (NY0V)

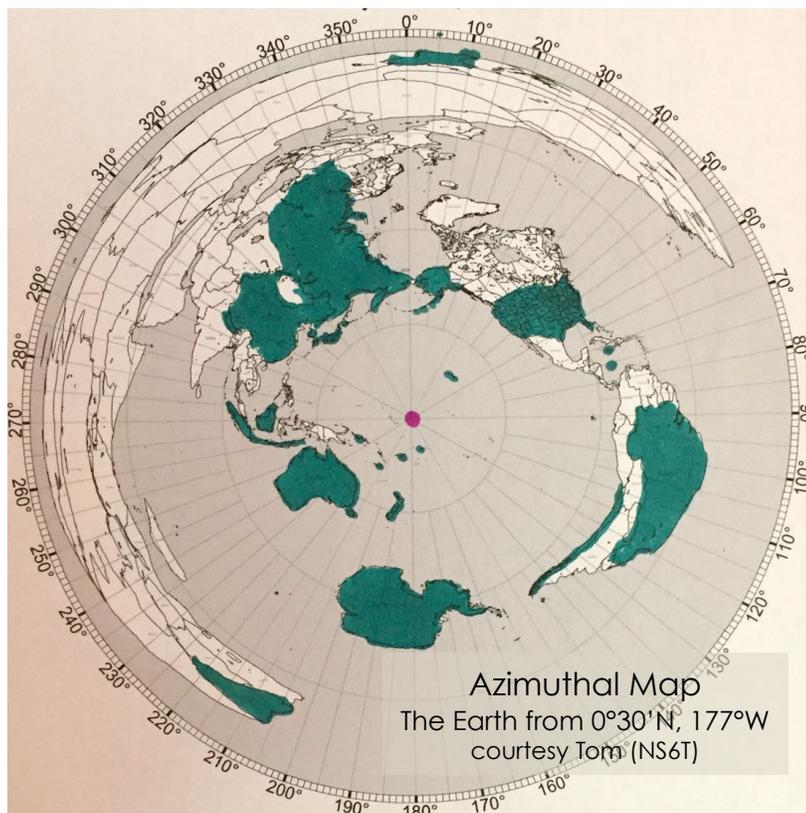
### Plan of the Day

March 19, 2017

**1000** Daily Progress Meeting: Ops Ctr.

**1700** Bar-b-cue, Aft Deck.

**1800** All Hands B-Ball Tournament.



## Sergiy Stepanov

### ETO

As ETO (Electro-Technical Officer), Sergiy is in charge of the maintenance of all electrical equipment on the ship. Sergiy is from Odessa, Ukraine and started working on ships 15 years ago. He is married and has two children. When he was getting on the ship, he learned his three-month-old daughter was born the very same day as Chief Engineer Oleks's twins, on December 12th!

Sergiy is athletic and loves sports. He plays soccer, football, rugby and tennis. He is also into martial arts and yoga. He says the disciplines help allow him to remain at peace when out to sea and far from family. Sergiy wants to be a yoga teacher in the future.



He is interested in how we are searching and started researching both Amelia Earhart and Alan Eustace because of our project. He says, "It's exciting because this is your history." He says he hope we find the plane so we can learn the



secrets of what happened.  
— Marika Lorraine

## Majuro

At the end of our expedition, we are planning to dock in Majuro, the capital and largest city of the Republic of the Marshall Islands. Though it spans an area of 114 square miles, most of that is lagoon, and the land area of the 64 islands in the atoll amounts of a mere 3.7 square miles! The highest elevation on the island is a scant 10 feet above sea level. The Marshall group is comprised of some 34 coral islands or atolls lying north of Kiribati and Micronesia and extending to the west as far as the Marianas.

Most of the population of close to 30,000 live on the eastern end of the chain, where most of the land area lies. The airport is on a narrow

strip to the south. The economy depends on the operation of the U.S. missile testing rang on Kwajalein and some tourism. Most of the outer island people live on subsistence farming and fishing, and the production of copra.

The island has seem human habitation for 2,000 years or more. In the modern era, the atoll along with the rest of the Marshall Islands was claimed by Germany, but was captured and occupied by the Japanese during Word War I. In January, 1944 American troops invaded the island, finding it undefended. It was used as a forward base of operations for the U.S. Navy during the rest of the war. The territory was retained by the United States until it was granted independence in 1986.

## MERMAID HOOPS!!

Elimination Tournament. Hoopsters, start brushing up your A-Game for the **MERMAID HOOPS** Tournament this Sunday at 6 PM. In this match-up, every player is a team of one. All players will get ONE shot from the same spot on the deck. Sink the shot, you advance to the next round. Miss the shot, have a seat. It's as simple as that. There will be no tie, only one winner. Anyone can enter.

## MERMAID CLASSIFIEDS

### PERSONALS 100

**THERE IS NO TRUTH** to the rumor that *Mermaid* will be dropping us in Australia on the way to Singapore. However, the current exchange rate is US\$1 = AUD\$1.30.

### WANTED 200

**STORIES** for *Meridian Passages*. Sea, land, or air stories welcome. Dave 4031.

**LESSONS LEARNED**, lessons not learned, lessons learned and forgotten, lessons ignored. For *EEDE Final Report*. Spence 4051.

### FOR SALE 400

**Majuro Vacations**. Sun. Beaches. Golf. Make reservations now. 555-CST-AWAY.

**Shrunken Cups**. A selection of generic little pre-shrunken cups available for a small gummy bear fee. One per customer, please. Sue (who else) at 3344.

### LOST & FOUND 500

Place New Ads by Friday – ed.

