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Chicagoan Tim Macek Sails Alaskan Waters Counting Fish for the Feds

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March 10, 1995

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*Locals
West. IL
Chicagoans
Features*Illinois Wesleyan University Magazine**Chicagoan Tim Macek Sails Alaskan Waters
Counting Fish for the Feds**

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.--Did you ever wonder what life is like aboard a fishing trawler, sailing the waters around Alaska?

Tim Macek, a resident of Chicago and a 1992 biology graduate of Illinois Wesleyan University, has lived and worked aboard nine fishing ships since April, 1993, making sure fishermen abide by complex federal rules and regulations, as an employee of the Seattle-based Alaskan Observers, a U.S. government contractor.

Macek's account of life aboard ships like the *Rebecca Irene*, *American Empress*, and *Deep Pacific* are found in the spring, 1995, edition of *Illinois Wesleyan University Magazine*.

Macek describes characters like a Japanese fishmaster, a 25-year veteran, who speaks little English but is a John Wayne movie fan, and "Sandy," the Scottish skipper of the *Northern Eagle*, who despite his thick brogue--which Macek found difficult to understand--conversed regularly with a heavily accented Vietnamese seaman.

He saw many storms, surviving 65-knot winds with 75-knot gusts and 25-foot seas. He saw a crabbing boat go down in a 35-knot storm near the Pribilof Islands. His vessel, *New Star*, which took two hours to reach the wreckage, was the first on site to rescue the five crew members.

"My job," Macek explained, "was to record how much fish was caught, what species were caught, and our interaction with marine mammals" like whales and sea lions, which are protected by environmental laws.

IWU, founded in 1850, enrolls about 1,800 students in a College of Liberal Arts, College of Fine Arts, and a four-year professional School of Nursing. In recent years, the university's endowment has grown to more than \$92 million; a \$15 million athletics and recreation center opened in the fall of 1994; and a \$24 million science building will open in 1995. The Carnegie Commission for the Advancement of Teaching promoted Illinois

(more)

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Wesleyan to a "Baccalaureate I" institution in 1994, a classification that places it among 164 highly selective National Liberal Arts Colleges in the annual *U.S. News & World Report* rankings. *U.S. News* ranks IWU the second most efficient national liberal arts college--a key gauge of the campus' quality academic program and relatively reasonable cost. *Barron's Profiles of American Colleges*, another respected college guide, rated IWU "highly competitive (+)" in its latest edition. IWU's 1994 freshman class scored an average 27.9 on the ACT exam, compared to the national average of 20.7.

Editor's Note: Tim Macek's adventures aboard fishing trawlers off the Alaskan coast are recounted in the attached article, "Counting Fish," in the spring, 1995, edition of *Illinois Wesleyan University Magazine*. For permission to reprint the article, please contact: *IWU Magazine* Executive Editor Bob Aaron at 309/556-3181.