

### At Sea –Day 65 Nov. 30:

Today started with bright sun and broken clouds. The sea was smooth and comfortable. We were in the first day of the five day cruise from Honolulu to Los Angeles. Our arrival in Los Angeles will mark the end of our 70 day voyage from Seattle to Russia, Asia, Australia and South Sea islands.

The major thing on our agenda for the day was the On Deck for the Cure charitable event in support of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. Passengers interested in participating could make a donation to the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation and receive a tee shirt inscribed with the “On Deck for the Cure” name for the Holland America program in support of that foundation. In addition, passengers could show additional commitment to the cause by taking part in a 5km (3 mile) walk with other contributors on the teakwood outdoor track of Deck 3 that circles the Amsterdam. We had our tee shirts and were ready for the morning walk.

At 9am we gathered with the other walkers in the Atrium on Deck 3. The Atrium had been decorated for the event with pink bunting, as shown in this picture we got of Sandy, Barbara and Esther on the right. In addition, a cake with pink frosting was on a serving table waiting for the celebration at the end of the walk.



Francois and Orlin show off their “Walk for the Cure” tee shirts before the big 5K walk begins.



Cruise Director, Gene Young addressed the group, as shown below. He said that the “On



Deck for the Cure” breast cancer fighting program had raised over 2 million dollars since the inception several years ago. He emphasized that we were carrying out a great tradition here today. He then asked the breast cancer survivors in the group to stand and he congratulated them.

In his introduction Gene had said that the 5K walk would be

accomplished by doing 10 laps around the Amsterdam. We were all eager to get started so the three ladies who were cancer survivors led us out of the Atrium onto the Deck 3 track and the 5K walk was off and running, as shown in the picture on the right.



Every time we circled the ship we would pass Adele, Gene or some assistant holding a card indicating the number of laps completed.



When we passed the lap counter station the third time we were pleased to see Adele holding a card showing that we had completed 3 laps, as shown on the left.

We kept up a steady pace but slowly we drifted toward the back of the pack of walkers. At least we kept up a fast enough pace that the lead people in the pack didn't pass us.



In less than an hour saw the welcome sign showing we had completed 10 laps around the ship and we had completed the 5K walk.

There was celebration in the Atrium on Deck 3 as the cake being cut up and passed around with a drink.

Holland America provides speakers on Grand Voyages who discuss a broad range of subjects. The speakers have usually specialized in some interesting endeavor that they talk about in a series of lectures called the “Exploration Speaker Series”. At 11am we attended an Exploration Series lecture by Tom Jones, shown on the left, who was on board to tell us about his experience as a US NASA Astronaut

His presentation today covered his early life and how he became an astronaut. He focused on the human aspects of the experience as he talked about challenges, disappointments and triumphs.



On his first orbital flight into space the rocket launch went perfectly but when the time came for him to exit the shuttle and do a space walk they found the exit door would not open. After trying several different techniques they decided to abandon the space walk. That was a huge disappointment to Tom. However, he returned on another space flight and performed a very successful space walk. During that space walk he viewed earth and the emptiness of space and got a lasting appreciation for the preciousness of earth and the universe we have been given to live in.

Tom Jones appears to be one of the best speakers we have had on the cruise and we plan to attend his future presentations. He will be talking about his experiences that are recorded in 6 books he has authored or co-authored. More information about his writing can be obtained at the website

[www.AstronautTomJones.com](http://www.AstronautTomJones.com)



At noon the Captain came on the PA system and updated us on the ship's position. We are on a north westerly course from the Hawaiian Islands headed for Los Angeles, California, as shown in the picture on the left. We have traveled about 200 miles since leaving Honolulu last night. The sea was moderate and the Amsterdam continued to bounce along but not at an uncomfortable magnitude. The motion of the ocean hasn't seemed to impede our appetites or the function of the dining rooms or kitchens.