

EXPEDITION NEWS



May 2008 - Volume Fifteen, Number Five

EXPEDITION NEWS, now in its 14th year, is the monthly review of significant expeditions, research projects and newsworthy adventures. It is distributed online and to media representatives, corporate sponsors, educators, research librarians, explorers, environmentalists, and outdoor enthusiasts. This forum on exploration covers projects that stimulate, motivate and educate.

VIESTURS AND STETSON BEGIN CANADIAN ARCTIC TREK FOR EARTH HEALTH

Late last month, climber and explorer Ed Viesturs and John Stetson, a renowned arctic explorer and dog sled musher, departed for the Canadian Arctic to mount a sledge hauling 150-mi. ski journey through one of the most beautiful and pristine areas of Northern Baffin Island. The theme for the 2008 Canadian Arctic Trek for Earth Health is Healthy Planet = Healthy People.

Their objective is twofold. First, to utilize and familiarize themselves with the equipment, systems, and strategy necessary for a possible future ski journey to the South Pole. Second, to showcase the effects of climate change already occurring in the Arctic regions. The expedition is expected to last approximately 20 days and Viesturs and Stetson plan to file daily progress reports via satellite telephone.

Among the sponsors is DeLorme which will provide a DeLorme Earthmate GPS PN-20, a WAAS-enabled, bright-color-screen handheld receiver capable of displaying multiple map and imagery types, including Landsat satellite imagery for the expedition route. Also involved: The Timberland Company and SmartWool Corporation which say that through his experience and valuable insight, Viesturs will play an instrumental role in the development of future mountaineering and hiking products. Both brands will also leverage Ed's presence at various media and consumer events throughout the year. (For more information: www.edviesturs.com). ▲

ICELAND SOLO CIRCUMNAVIGATION SEA KAYAK EXPEDITION

New York City-based kayaker Marcus Demuth will depart June 7 on a solo circumnavigation of Iceland by sea kayak. This estimated 2-1/2 month, 1,450 mile trip has reportedly been attempted solo only twice, and has been successfully completed only once. Demuth, departing from Reykjavik, will circle Iceland in a clockwise direction to take advantage of the currents. He will carry enough camping gear and food for three weeks at a time, stopping to replenish food supplies as needed.

Demuth's Around Iceland 2008 Sea Kayak Expedition will raise funds for the all-volunteer Icelandic Association for Search and Rescue (ICE-SAR), which coordinates 220 sea and mountain rescue teams, accident prevention divisions and youth sections. Demuth, 38, who works as a musical instrument coordinator for BMP, the parent company of Blue Man Group, will dedicate his trip to ICE-SAR in the hopes of raising awareness and valuable funds for the vital work that their volunteers do under life threatening weather conditions. The expedition is being sponsored by kayak manufacturer Kokatat of Arcadia, Calif.

Iceland, with its northern shore just two miles shy of the Arctic Circle, is located in one of the toughest marine environments in the world, the North Atlantic Ocean. The exposure of its South Western coast to the large Atlantic swells creates large, dumping surf which makes landings extremely difficult; the katabatic winds that howl over sloping glaciers and scarcely populated jagged shores, not to mention the

continued on page 2

cold temperatures and fast changing weather patterns, seriously challenged previous expeditions. This may explain why so few kayakers have attempted to circumnavigate Iceland by sea kayak.

In 2007, Demuth successfully circumnavigated Ireland as a fundraiser for the Royal National Lifeboat Association (RNLI), a trip of over 1,100 nautical miles in 42 days. Past expeditions brought Demuth to Patagonia/Chile (2006), the South and West Coast of Australia (2007), and Nova Scotia (2005). (For more information: www.aroundiceland2008.com; marcusdemuth@yahoo.com). ▲▲

SHACK'S DESCENDANTS SET OUT 100 YEARS LATER

Three descendants of Sir Ernest Shackleton and his team are carrying out grueling training in Greenland to prepare for an attempt to complete the explorer's failed journey to the South Pole.

The Shackleton Centenary Expedition will depart in October, 100 years after the original expedition and following the same 900-mile, 80-day route as their predecessors.

Shackleton's crew was forced to turn back 97 miles from the Pole on January 9, 1909. The 21st-century explorers are being led by Army Lt. Col. Henry Worsley, a descendant of Frank Worsley, Shackleton's skipper on the *Endurance*, the ship used in a following Polar expedition. He traveled to Greenland on April 15 with team members Will Gow and Henry Adams for a "full dress rehearsal" for the "main event." The men have been training for four years.

Gow, 35, from Ashford, Kent, UK, is related to Shackleton by marriage, and Adams, 33, from Suffolk, is a great-grandson of Jameson Boyd-Adams, Shackleton's number two.

Quote of the Month

"Why, then, the world's my oyster which I with sword will open."

– William Shakespeare, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*

The men will set out from the edge of the Ross Ice Shelf on Oct. 28, as Shackleton and his team did a century earlier. They will be joined by Patrick Bergel, Shackleton's great-grandson; Tim Fright, great-great-nephew of Frank Wild, the only explorer to accompany Shackleton on all his missions; and David Cornell, 38, another great-grandson of Boyd-Adams.

The expedition will launch the £10 million Shackleton Foundation, which will fund projects that embody his hunger for "calculated risk." (For more information: www.shackletoncentenary.org). ▲▲

EXPEDITION UPDATE

Have a Seat

Seattle-based extreme athlete Erden Eruç of the Around-n-Over Expedition is battling winds and currents on the Pacific Ocean in his attempt to row solo from California to the Philippines. At press time, he had been at sea for 288 days. If all goes as planned, on May 10 Eruç will have set the record for the number of continuous days at sea by an ocean rower. It is believed he will also become the first person in history to row solo across the North Pacific, east to west.

Last month, Eruç, 46, was running short of provisions and required replacement parts including a seaworthy rowing seat. A resupply effort is being organized in Seattle by Around-n-Over volunteers. Kenneth Crutchlow, executive director of the Ocean Rowing Society in London, is planning to transport the nearly 400 lbs. of supplies, traveling by air to Jakarta and then by sea to Eruç's 23-ft. ocean-faring rowboat which at press time was about 700 miles due southeast of the small island of Palau.

Around-n-Over is a non-profit organization supporting Eruç's 10-year quest to circumnavigate the globe under human power, or as his supporters put it, "No sails, no motors, no bottled oxygen – just raw human power." Eruç's eventual goal is to climb the highest summits on six continents after approaching each by bicycle and on foot, and to row across three oceans (See *EN*, June 2004). By sharing his journey with students worldwide through Around-n-Over, Eruç hopes to instill the values of selflessness, sacrifice and perseverance in the tradition of previous adventurers and expeditions. (For more information: www.around-n-over.org).

Vertical Circumnavigation Almost Complete

British yachtsman Adrian Flanagan will set sail this month on the final leg of the Alpha Global Expedition (See *EN*, July 2007). Success will see Flanagan become the first solo

yachtsman to complete a “vertical” circumnavigation of the earth – considered the last great sailing prize in long distance, single-handed sailing. The last part of the voyage is a 1,600-mi. stretch from Mehamn in northern Norway to The Royal Southern Yacht Club on England’s south coast.

Flanagan, 47, has already sailed more than 30,000 miles. Departing the south coast of England on October 28, 2005, he has become only the 14th lone yachtsman to sail west around Cape Horn against wind and current and is the only single-handed yachtsman ever to have sailed Russia’s Arctic coast, according to his expedition manager, Louise Flanagan.

To accomplish a vertical circumnavigation, Flanagan’s track needed to pass over two points on the earth’s surface which are diametrically opposite each other – or antipodal. The “vertical” part comes in because his route takes him to both the Arctic and Antarctic regions.

During the course of his voyage around the world on *Barrabas*, a French-designed 40-ft. trireme constructed entirely of stainless steel, Flanagan has been shadowed by pirates, suffered two capsizes at Cape Horn and dislocated both his wrists. One time in severe storm force conditions, he was swept from the deck of his boat without a lifeline but managed to scramble back on board, cheating death by the narrowest of margins.

Flanagan had to break the Alpha Global Expedition twice. Delays in gaining permission from the Russian government to enter their territorial waters meant *Barrabas* had to spend the winter of 2006-07 in Nome, Alaska. She spent the 2007-08 winter season in Norway after reaching the treacherous Norwegian Sea too late after passing across the top of the world from Alaska to Europe.

“It has been long and hard, but the pursuit of dreams is not an easy business. I’ve wanted to do this since I was a teenager,” Flanagan said. (For more information: www.alphaglobalex.com). ▲

EXPEDITION NOTES

Hard Landing for Space Pro – Peggy A. Whitson is now the single most experienced astronaut in American history. When she landed Apr. 19 with two crewmates, she had spent 377 days of her life in space.

But re-entry, in Russia’s Soyuz TMA-11 spacecraft, was not as planned. The Russian news agency Interfax reports the crew was in “serious danger” as they came down.

The ship landed on the steppes of Kazakhstan about 295 miles short of its target. It took 45 minutes for a rescue helicopter to reach her and her two crewmates – Russian cosmonaut Yuri Malenchenko and South Korean astronaut So-yeon Yi.

Their ship, says Interfax, entered the atmosphere with its hatch facing forward instead of its heat shield. The story quotes an unidentified Russian space official as saying the hatch was damaged, as well as a valve that equalizes air pressure between the inside and outside of the ship after it enters the atmosphere.

“The fact that the entire crew ended up whole and undamaged is a great success. Everything could have turned out much worse,” the official is quoted as saying. “You could say the situation was on a razor’s edge.”

William Gerstenmaier, NASA’s space operations chief, said, “We’ve detected something on two flights significant enough that it needs to be understood. But the good news is that we have the right people working on this. The Russians are taking this extremely seriously.”

NASA says it is much too early to draw any long-term conclusions about the long-term reliability of the Russian ferry craft. After the space shuttles are retired in 2010, the plan is to rely on Russian Soyuz ships for several years to transport American astronauts to the space station.

Hams Seek Team Members for DXpedition to Alaska – Way back before the Internet, about when the *Twilight Zone* was just beginning to air on TV, it was cool to be an amateur radio operator. While it wasn’t a fast track to winning over the captain of the high school cheerleading squad, it had its advantages. You could sit in a radio “shack” in your basement and pull in a distant voice or Morse code signal from Europe or Australia and do so without using the telephone.

Today there are 656,000 amateur radio operators in the U.S. who still get a kick out of having these conversations with other hams. Hams are passionate list makers – they log each conversation – called a QSO – and request confirmation postcards – called QSLs – to prove to visitors and DX (distance) contest judges that they reached dozens, if not hundreds of countries, even countries and territories most people have never heard about.

In July, Yuri Sushkin, 38, CEO of NSI Communications, a Seattle radio equipment company, is leading the Chuginadak Island DXpedition. He is looking for three people –hams and non-hams alike – at \$10,000 each to share in the adventure to this hard-to-reach active volcano in the Islands of Four

Mountains group, about a 20-hour boat ride from Dutch Harbor, Alaska. Their objective is to make as many two-way conversations as possible from July 21-27 using a portable field station powered by a 2 kilowatt Honda generator.

Based upon past DXexpeditions to remote locations that other hams desperately wanted to contact for their DX list, the number of QSOs could reach 5,000 depending upon radio conditions that week. Sponsors include Icom and SPOT Satellite Personal Tracker. (For more information: Yuri Sushkin, 206 529 5168, n3qq@na-234.com, www.NA-234.com).

AAC Announces Spitzer and McNeill-Nott Awards – The American Alpine Club has announced the 2008 winners of its two major expedition grants: the Lyman Spitzer Cutting-Edge Award and the McNeill-Nott Award. Seven grants totaling \$19,500 will help American climbers attempt new routes from Alaska to Pakistan. The five winners of the Lyman Spitzer Award are:

- Vince Anderson, for an alpine-style attempt on the west face of Makalu in Nepal, with Steve House and Marko Prezelj.
- Micah Dash, who will journey to southeastern Tibet with Jonny Copp for an attempt on unclimbed Dojitsenga (5,700 m).
- Ben Gilmore, for an attempt on the 11,400-foot Rabbit's Ears, possibly the highest unclimbed peak in the Alaska Range, with Maxime Turgeon and Freddie Wilkinson.
- Chad Kellogg, who will travel to Sichuan, China, to attempt the southwest ridge of Siguniang with Dylan Johnson.
- Josh Wharton, for an attempt on the giant north face of Latok I with Whit Magro.

In addition, the AAC announced two winners of the second annual McNeill-Nott Award. This grant, backed by Mountain Hardware, was created in honor of Karen McNeill and Sue Nott, who disappeared while climbing Mt. Foraker in Alaska. The 2008 winners of the McNeill-Nott Award are:

- Alex Alexiades, for exploration and new routes in the Suches Valley of the remote Cordillera Apolobamba, on the border of Bolivia and Peru, as part of a team of six climbers.

- Althea Rogers, for an expedition to attempt new free climbs on the granite domes of southeast Alaska's Wood River Range, with Kate Rutherford, Madaleine Sorkin, and Emily Stifler.

Each year, the AAC provides a total of \$40,000 in grant money for cutting-edge expeditions, mountain fellowships for young climbers, conservation and humanitarian projects, and scientific research. (For more information: www.americanalpineclub.org). ▲▲



MEDIA MATTERS

Get Reel – If you were ever wondering how to get hundreds of climbers to sit still in a dark room for hours, one answer is The Reel Rock Film Tour. Now in its third season and with 100 or more screenings of the world's best climbing films, Reel Rock is becoming one of the most prominent social events for local climbing communities across the country.

Presenting sponsors are W.L. Gore & Associates' Windstopper, and The North Face. La Sportiva is also involved on many levels, ranging from marketing and sponsorship support to athlete involvement.

While the Reel Rock Film Tour was built around one feature length movie last year, this year it will have more variety with clips from several movies, including Sender Films' new title, *The Sharp End*, and Big Up Productions' new volume in the Dosage series, *Dosage 5*. In addition, there will be a separate film on Tommy Caldwell and Beth Rodden rafting through The Grand Canyon, searching for adventurous first ascents in Grand Canyon Walls by Josh Lowell and Peter Mortimer.

This year also marks the launch of the Reel Rock Filmmaking Competition which is accepting submissions of short films (three minutes max.) in two categories: Action/Adventure, and Humor/Spoof, through July 15. The Reel Rock tour will kick off Sept. 10 at the Boulder Theatre in Boulder, Colo. (For more information: www.reelrocktour.com).

Why Climb a Mountain? – That's what writer Michael J. Ybarra asks in an Apr. 9 *Wall Street Journal* profile of the new Bradford Washburn American Mountaineering Museum in Golden, Colo. "A museum that aspired to give some idea of what the actual experience was like would be a liability suit in the making," he writes.

"To begin with, the museum would need to be cold (if you could feel your fingers or toes the room would be too warm).

The experience would need to meld tedium and terror (imagine holding a rope for hours while your partner leads out of sight, and then imagine being on the other end of that rope). And it would have to include a good sprinkling of random danger (rocks dropping from above, the occasional avalanche). Ideally, no visitor would be allowed to eat or sleep for the 24 hours before arrival; the departure of each would be uncertain.

“Such a museum would, in other words, be a place that no one in his or her right mind would visit,” writes Ybarra.

Flag Flap – When two Russian submersibles planted a flag on the sea floor at the North Pole beneath the Arctic Ocean last August, it sent a chill through four other countries with Arctic coastlines: the U.S., Canada, Norway, and Denmark. The ships spent about 8-1/2 hours underwater, and 90 minutes at the bottom, according to a story by Alex Shoumatoff in the May issue of *Vanity Fair*.

At the helm of *Mir-1* was Anatoly Sagalevich, head of the Deep Manned Submersibles Laboratory at the Russian Academy of Science’s P.P. Shirshov Institute of Oceanology. Using a robotic arm, he collected geologic samples and planted a titanium Russian flag in the murky sediment.

The two submersibles were plastered with the logos of eight sponsors – the Kremlin was 100 percent behind this expedition, in every way except its funding. The submersible team was considered heroes in Moscow. The reception was cooler elsewhere in the world. “This isn’t the 15th century,” protested Peter MacKay, Canada’s foreign minister. “You can’t go around the world and just plant flags.”

Polar scientist Artur Chilingarov, who was along for the ride, tells *Vanity Fair*; “It’s only natural that our dive had great patriotic impact, and of course, we planted the flag, as Americans would do in a similar case ... if anyone wants to plant a flag down there, they’re welcome to. There’s plenty of room.”

Ice Ice Baby – *Ice People* takes you on one of the earth’s most seductive journeys – Antarctica. Emmy-winning documentary filmmaker Anne Aghion spent four months “on the ice” with modern-day polar explorers, to find out what drives dedicated researchers to leave the world behind in pursuit of science, and to capture the true experience of living and working in this extreme environment.

The public focus on climate change has turned the shores of Antarctica into a new tourist mecca, making the earth’s coldest continent the hot place to be. But inland from the penguins and ice floes, is a land of volcanoes, boulder-strewn

valleys and ominous glaciers. Only a small number of scientific research teams get there, braving severe conditions to learn about our planet’s history, and make predictions about our future.

Ice People heads out into the “deep field” with noted geologists Allan Ashworth and Adam Lewis, and two undergrad scientists-in-the-making, where they scour across hundreds of miles to find tiny, critical signs of life 20 million years old. (See the trailer at: www.icepeople.com).

Life Among the Polies – Life for Americans at the South Pole is actually part of a “giant geopolitical chess game,” reports Peter Breslow on National Public Radio’s Weekend Edition (Mar. 15).

“A tiny group of Americans has lived down here since the 1950s, but they worked in funky buildings that were getting buried by snow. And in the mid-1990s, Congress asked a blue ribbon panel: Do Americans really need to live at the South Pole at all? Is it worth spending all that money?”

Breslow’s report continues, “The panel members answered yes. The substantial U.S. presence in Antarctica is viewed by the panel as a critical, perhaps the most critical, element in assuring the region’s continued political stability.”

Breslow explains, “Things in Antarctica haven’t always been stable. Just before World War II, the Nazi regime planted flags on the continent for Hitler. After the war, Britain and Argentina almost started a war over claims on a chunk of the continent. And when the Cold War started, the Soviets said they were going to set up a base at the South Pole, so the U.S. rushed there first. But since then, more than 40 countries have signed a remarkable treaty that has kept the peace.”

Said Paddy Douglas, a “Polie” who runs the cargo crew at the base airport, “It’s one of the last frontiers. These things that we’re doing – we’re exploring. And it helps define who we are, and that’s exciting.” (Hear the broadcast at <http://www.npr.org>). ▲

EXPEDITION MARKETING

He Walks the Walk

Call it an adventurous PR stunt or a wild trip tinged with education. Paul Hubner, president of Baffin, was testing his company’s boots at press time last month during an arduous North Pole expedition. He explained his motivation and experiences in the ice-covered landscape to DigitalJournal.com.

continued on page 6

"I'm exhausted but satisfied," Hubner said while camping on an ice floe in the Arctic Ocean. Hubner is pulling a Richard Branson, Canadian style. As president of Baffin, a footwear firm based out of Stoney Creek, Ontario, Hubner wants to promote the ruggedness of his company's trademark boots, and use his polar trips to refine the design of Baffin footwear. In January, he tested Baffin Boots in the South Pole, where he said they withstood chilling temperatures and blowing snow.

On April 16, Hubner embarked on his North Pole mission, aiming to be one of the first Canadians to ski both poles within a three-month period. His plan was to ski more than 100 km (62 miles) over 12 days. "There's a sense of accomplishment at seeing both ends of the world," he says.

His North Pole expedition is also moonlighting as a fundraising cause: as he did at the South Pole, Hubner hopes to raise money for charities Polar Bears International and Northern Youth Community Charities. In January, Hubner raised \$500,000 for charities during that trip.

Hubner can't resist extolling the advantages of the polar adventure for Baffin. "Sure, the marketing benefits are there. And it's good to get the message across that we're a small company and not a massive corporation with shareholders sitting around a board room." Instead, Baffin's president is skiing across ice sheets at the North Pole.

"There is far more shifting and breaking ice than there ever has been before," Hubner tells DigitalJournal.com. He skied the North Pole with his friend two years ago. "Scientists I've spoken to have told me I won't be able to make this trip 50 years from now."

Hubner continues, "Hopefully, the world will see the deteriorating ice conditions in the Arctic. Maybe that will spark some change." (For more information: www.baffin.com). ▲

WEB WATCH

Sir Ed Lives in Your Pocket – A goofy but heartfelt tribute to the late Everest pioneer has been recorded by New Zealand singer/songwriters Jody Lloyd and Tim Kelleher. Keying off the Hillary portrait on New Zealand's five-dollar note, we're not quite sure what to make of lyrics like:

*You may be gone but you live on in my wallet
You'll never be forgotten in the bottom of my pocket*

Luckily, it sounds better than it reads. See the music video at www.youtube.com/watch?v=4xgIebk-zHE. ▲

ON THE HORIZON

AC International Climbing Meet – Indian Creek, Utah, is home to the world's best crack climbing. The Creek's endless splitters of all sizes and lengths offer up challenges of endurance and strength and have been a worldwide climbing destination for over three decades, making it the perfect location for hosting the American Alpine Club's 2008 International Climbing Meet, Oct. 3-9, 2008.

During the meet's weeklong run, climbers from climbing clubs and mountaineering federations throughout the world will come together to share in the unique experience of Indian Creek crack climbing. American Alpine Club host climbers will give the visiting climbers the grand tour of the Creek, from the tasty tips cracks to the gnarly off widths.

The deadline for all applications is July 1. (For more information: dritchardson@americanalpineclub.org, www.americanalpineclub.org). ▲

EXPEDITION CLASSIFIEDS

Professional Expedition Photography – An expedition is usually the culmination of many years of work and planning. Whether the photographic record is for commercial, archive, or personal reasons it is a vital part of the expedition. It is important that you employ a capable and competent photographer. Visit our web site: <http://www.expeditionphotographer.co.uk>.

Steger Moosehide Mukluks and Moccasins – You've most likely heard of us. Odds are you've seen our boots worn by expeditioners in some very remote and extremely cold places. We make the warmest, most comfortable winter boots and moccasins in the world. Steger footwear has been made entirely in Ely, Minnesota since 1986. For expeditions and any extreme conditions we recommend the doublewide Arctic or Yukon styles. Order online at www.mukluks.com. For a catalog, you can download one from the website or call 800 685 5857 (800-MUKLUKS). Visit our Retail Store at 33 E. Sheridan, Ely, MN 55731.

Expedition Public Relations – Alex Foley & Associates specializes in Expedition PR. The London-based firm has executed PR programs for many international expeditions, often to maximise value for the title sponsors, including the 1996 Titanic Expedition, Ice Challenger, Snickers South Pole and recently Expedition 360. Tel: +44 (0)20 7352 3144, www.alexfoleypr.com, alex@alexfoleypr.com

continued on page 7

Costa Del Mar Sunglasses – The leader in high performance polarized sunglasses is interested in sponsoring expeditions. Help us “See what’s out there™.” See Costa Del Mar’s online video network dedicated to water sports and angling adventures (www.costachannelc.com). Submit film footage of “you-had-to-see-it-to-believe-it” extreme water sports and fishing expeditions. Contact Laurie Driggs at ldriggs@costadelmar.com for information. Learn more about our commitment to exploration and adventure travel at: <http://www.costadelmar.com/adventures>.

Himalaya Climbs and Treks – Five percent discount for Explorers Club members. Climbs and Treks with Dan Mazur and SummitClimb.com - Africa, Himalaya, Aconcagua, Everest Basecamp Treks, Kilimanjaro and Mt. Kenya Treks and Climbs. Ascents and walks around Africa, Tibet, China, Nepal and around the world with our experienced friendly team. Established for 18 years. Novices, and experts are welcome. 360 570 0715, info@SummitClimb.com, www.summitclimb.com.

New LEKI Antishock System – LEKI, the leading international manufacturer of trekking poles, has introduced a Soft Antishock-Lite (SAS-L) System that provides much more comfort along the trail. The impact energy is absorbed directly into the lower shaft. The perfect combination of steel spring and elastomer provides precise synchronization between spring strength and compression – making trekking with a pole more comfortable than ever, reducing stress on the joints, muscles and ligaments. (www.leki.com)

Tights, Tops and Sport Support Bras for Athletes – CW-X Conditioning Web is specifically tuned to provide total support to the key muscle groups and joints of the lower limbs and upper body. Tights and Tops, and the company’s new Sports Support Bras, are made for a wide variety of high-energy activities, including running, fitness walking, hiking, cycling, skiing, snowboarding, track and field, and other fitness activities. It has been worn to the summit of Everest on at least two occasions. (www.cw-x.com) 