

EXPEDITION NEWS

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December 2013 – Volume Twenty, Number Twelve

EXPEDITION NEWS, founded in 1994, is the monthly review of significant expeditions, research projects and newsworthy adventures. It is distributed online to media representatives, corporate sponsors, educators, research librarians, explorers, environmentalists, and outdoor enthusiasts. This forum on exploration covers projects that stimulate, motivate and educate.

SNORKELING THE CANADIAN ARCTIC

Susan Eaton, a Calgary-based geologist, geophysicist, journalist and Arctic and Antarctic snorkeler, is leading two all-female extreme snorkel relays to the Canadian Arctic, in 2014 and 2016. “The purpose of the proof of concept expedition (July 2014) and the larger Northwest Passage snorkel relay (summer 2016), is to raise awareness of disappearing sea ice and climate change in the Arctic and to engage Inuit women and girls in building sustainable communities, she told ExplorersWeb.

In July 2016, the all-female SEDNA Expedition, named for Sedna, the Goddess of the Sea and the mother of marine mammals, will embark on a three-month journey, snorkeling over 1,864-mi./3,000 km through Arctic seas from Pond Inlet, Nunavut, to Inuvik, Northwest Territories. The 10 polar snorkelers – supported by two mother ships, each equipped with Zodiac boats – will create world-wide awareness of rapidly disappearing sea ice, documenting the impacts of global warming on this fragile ecosystem and on the traditional way of life for the people of the North.

But first, in the summer of 2104, Team SEDNA will travel aboard the 116-foot *MV Cape Race*, from northern Labrador to Baffin Island and across the Davis Strait to Western Greenland, testing their “proof-of-concept” by focusing on team-building and demonstrating that snorkelers – using diver propulsion vehicles – can successfully “go the distance” through ice-infested waters.

Read an interview with Eaton here: http://www.explorersweb.com/print.php?url=susan-eaton-nwp-snorkel_1381437537

EXPEDITION NOTES

The Edwardian Equivalent of Space Travel

When Douglas Mawson plodded into base camp at Commonwealth Bay in Antarctica in February 1913, his fellow explorers barely recognized him. The geologist was in terrible physical shape after a harrowing journey into the Antarctic interior during which two of his fellow explorers had died. By the time his ship, the *SY Aurora*, arrived in December 1913, to take his team home, they had spent more than two years on the frozen continent – a whole year longer than planned. It was the Edwardian equivalent of space travel.

Mawson's was one of the major expeditions during what has become known as the "Heroic Age" of Antarctic exploration of a century ago. Unlike his better known contemporaries Ernest Shackleton, Roald Amundsen and Robert Falcon Scott, he had no interest in racing to the South Pole, preferring to focus on scientific research. Two-thirds of his crew were scientists engaged in geological, marine and wildlife research and their measurements, carefully made in the face of tragic losses and horrendous conditions, are some of the most valuable scientific data in existence.

This month, scientists began the month-long Australasian Antarctic Expedition 2013 to re-trace Mawson's journey and examine how the eastern Antarctic, one of the most pristine, remote and untouched parts of the world's surface, has responded after a hundred years of climate changes. (For more information: www.spiritofmawson.com)

Bike the Hudson

Something tells us there are some new firsts waiting, if you can call it that. Now that the Hudson River and San Francisco Bay have been successfully crossed by bicycle, expect to see other body of waters attempted. This fall ad man Judah Schiller, of Mill Valley, Calif., founder of BayCycle Project, crossed both the Hudson River and San Francisco Bay on a bike mounted to two pontoons.

BayCycle Project is introducing a sustainable commuting alternative, showing the world that biking across bodies of water is possible even where there are no bridges or bike lanes. Schiller calls it a new aquatic frontier in biking.

BayCycle Project is the first U.S. organizing body and community for water biking, a new sport that combines the adventure and health benefits of bike riding with the dynamic and ever changing terrain of water. Water biking is said to hold many recreational and competitive possibilities for bicyclists. It may also serve as a viable form of bike commuting in cities with navigable waterways.

We're thinking adventurers will soon latch onto the concept to cross far more knarly bodies of water.

(For more information: www.baycycleproject.com and <http://youtu.be/UtMDkRRWr6o>)

HIV/AIDS Campaigner Completes Circumvention of Long Island by Rowboat

Victor Mooney of Flushing, N.Y., and his 24-ft. foot Brazilian-made ocean rowboat *Spirit of Malabo* completed a circumvention of Long Island early last month in preparation for his fourth bid to cross the Atlantic Ocean.

Later this year, Mooney, 48, will depart from Las Palmas, Canary Islands, and row 5,000 miles back to New York with a resupply in the British Virgin Islands. The rower, executive director for South African Arts International, has lost one brother to AIDS and has another battling the disease. Mooney hopes his row will encourage HIV testing.

His last three attempts were valiant tries: his homemade boat sunk off the coast of Dakar in 2006; in 2009 he aborted 600 miles from Dakar when he couldn't produce electricity to run a desalinator; during a third try in 2011, his boat was damaged in transit, causing him to abandon ship and live in a life raft for 14 days drifting in the Atlantic until rescue.

(For more information: www.goreechallenge.com, <http://youtu.be/Z0JrYUxWNgQ>)

Adventurers Needed to Study Native U.S. Grasslands

The steppes of Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Patagonia and the Northern Great Plains of America are the four places left on Earth where vast, native grasslands have never been plowed. In 2014, Adventurers and Scientists for Conservation (ASC) and American Prairie Reserve (APR) are partnering on an adventure-science wildlife study on the prairies of northeastern Montana.

Since 2001, APR has been working to create the largest protected wildlife area in the Continental United States. When completed the area will be larger than Yellowstone National Park and contain many of the species present when Lewis and Clark first crossed the plains, including the nation's largest herd of free-roaming bison. Currently the Reserve covers 270,000 acres and is visited by more than 60 mammal species and 250 species of birds. The Reserve is home to many of North America's native wildlife including bison, pronghorn, sage grouse, prairie dog, bald eagle and mountain lion.

To learn more about this diversity of life, ASC is beginning a multi-year adventure-science study on the Reserve. Six-person survey crews will cover the grasslands in all four seasons collecting wildlife data. The collected data will establish trends over time and inform management decisions as the Reserve grows.

(For more information: www.americanprairiereserve.org, www.adventureandscience.org)

AAC Members Study Peru's Glaciated Peaks

Nearly 50 American Alpine Club members volunteered with the American Climber Science Program (ACSP) in Peru's Cordillera Blanca this summer. For the past three years, the ACSP and AAC members have innovated new field research techniques examining environmental change on Huascaran National Park's highest glaciated peaks, summiting peaks as high as Huascaran Sur (22,205-ft./6768 m) to collect data.

As a team, the ACSP spends three months each Peruvian winter in elevations from 12,000 to 20,000 feet working extensively with Peru's scientists, academics, and planners during this conservation and research program.

The team collected data for a range of research projects including water quality, vegetation change, and glacier recession. They also collected several thousand vegetation photos as part of an effort to write and publish a book titled, *Flora of Huascarán National Park and the Cordillera Blanca*.

(For more information: <http://inclined.americanalpineclub.org/2013/10/climbers-and-scientists-working-together-in-the-cordillera-blanca-peru/>)

The First Photograph: Who Knew?

One of the last things we expected to see during a recent business trip to Austin, Tex., was the very first photograph ever taken. Indeed. There in the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas at Austin is the forerunner to every daguerreotype, to every photo of Shackleton and Scott, the ancestor of every National Geographic image.

Joseph Nicéphore Niépce's *View from the Window at Le Gras*, circa 1826-27, is among the world's greatest treasures and known everywhere as the "First Photograph." The image, a heliograph on pewter, depicts the view from an upstairs window at his estate, Le Gras, which is located in the Burgundy region of France. As such, it represents the origin of today's photography, film, and other media arts. The image was taken using pewter plates coated with bitumen of Judea (an asphalt derivative of petroleum). He loaded it into a camera obscura looking out his second-story window.

After an exposure of at least eight hours, Niépce, who lived from 1765 to 1833, removed the plate and washed it with a mixture of white petroleum and oil of lavender to dissolve the areas of bitumen that had not been hardened by light. He called his invention "heliography" or sun drawing. You can see it here:
<http://www.hrc.utexas.edu/exhibitions/permanent/>

Help Build a Cross-Country Bicycle

The Explorers Club is looking for technically proficient volunteers for a 2015 expedition to build a unique bicycle to cross the country using only human, wind, solar, and mechanical energy (solar and mechanical engineers and bicycle assemblers preferred). It will be a flag expedition in connection with the next crossing by the sun powered Solar Impulse airplane in 2015 as part of the effort of members Bertrand Piccard and Andre Borschberg to circle the world in a sun-powered airplane. (For more information: Linn Johnson, linnjohnson@hotmail.com – insert "Bike Project" in the subject line).

F-4 Needed for Joe Kittinger Park

Community support is building to honor Col. Joe W. Kittinger, USAF (Retired) with an historic jet for a park bearing his name. Friends of Kittinger are attempting to raise \$200,000 needed to bring an F-4 Phantom jet to Joe Kittinger Park near Orlando

(Fla.) Executive Airport. The monument will also honor and recognize the Central Florida Veterans that served the U.S. and participated in the Vietnam War from 1961-1973. Kittinger shot down a MiG 21 with an F-4.

In 1960, Kittinger set a record by skydiving from an altitude of 19 miles, landing himself on the cover of *Life Magazine*. The record was broken in 2012 when Felix Baumgartner jumped from a helium balloon 24 miles in the air. Kittinger helped Baumgartner beat that record.

(For more information: Kittinger F-4 Park, Inc., 608 Mariner Way, Altamonte Springs, FL 32701).

Have Camera-Will Travel: Photography/Videographer Available

Professional photographer Bernard P. Friel of Mendota Heights, Minn., offers his services to exploration projects looking for someone to document their expedition with photographs or video. Friel has had over 30 years experience leading and documenting expeditions in such diverse locations as the Arctic, Africa, Papua New Guinea, South America, Canada and scores of remote and wilderness areas in the U.S.

(For more information: www.wampy.com, 651 454 3655, wampy@att.net).

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"I cannot rest from travel; I will drink life to the lees."

– *Ulysses*, by Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)

(Editor's note: "lees" refers to the sediment of wine in a barrel)

MEDIA MATTERS

Bleak Days for Space Exploration

In a *Wall Street Journal* (Nov. 30-Dec. 1) review of astronaut Chris Hadfield's book, *An Astronaut's Guide to Life on Earth* (Little, Brown, 2013), Adam Savage paints of bleak picture of current space exploration. He writes, "But these days hardly seem like hopeful ones for space exploration. The Space Shuttle has been retired, and it's not clear what our future goals for extraplanetary endeavors should be, nor how they will be funded. Congress has trimmed NASA's budget, and its ambitions.

"Even those of us who retain a capacity for wonder might find ourselves questioning our society's commitment to science and the furthering of our understanding of our universe."

He praises Hadfield and his book, explaining that Hadfield is a "great communicator in the Carl Sagan sense, who knows the power of social media and uses it with the savvy of a rock star. To his million-plus followers on Twitter, he has posted scores of photographs

showing us our Earth and our galaxy from the unique vantage point of the International Space Station.”

Young People Must Test Themselves

News of Nicholas Mevoli’s death last month during a freediving competition at Dean’s Blue Hole in the Bahamas has shocked many of the sport’s devotees. Tim Winton writes in the *New York Times* (Nov. 23), “...young people need to test themselves. In domesticated societies so bereft of wildness, they need to register the cold scorch of fear now and then in order to feel truly alive. And it’s good for people to find and exceed their limits.

“Humans have long survived through the willed suppression of panic. Without it there would be no hunting, no exploration, no innovation, no civility.”

EXPEDITION MARKETING

LEKI Signs Climber Melissa Arnot

LEKI, the Buffalo, N.Y.-based manufacturer of skiing, trekking and Nordic walking poles, has signed mountain guide and climber Melissa Arnot to join its roster of sponsored athletes which includes fellow climber Ueli Steck. Arnot is the women’s record holder for Everest summits (five). She has been part of four expeditions to Cotopaxi, four to Aconcagua, three to Cayambe and has summited Rainier over 100 times. As part of her multi-year sponsorship agreement, Arnot will be a brand ambassador and provide input to the company’s design and development team on future product introductions. (www.leki.com)

EXPEDITION INK

2013 National Outdoor Book Award Winners Announced

A clash between politics and nature is front and center among the winners of the 2013 National Outdoor Book Awards.

Krista Schlyer in her winning book *The Great Divide*, reports on the controversial border wall between the United States and Mexico and its effect on the natural environment.

"This is a groundbreaking work," said Ron Watters, the chair of the National Outdoor Book Awards. "The effects of the border wall on the environment have been left out of the national discourse, but Krista Schlyer casts a bright light on this forgotten part of the debate."

Schlyer's book won the Nature and Environment category, one of ten categories which make up the National Outdoor Book Awards. The awards program is sponsored by the National Outdoor Book Awards Foundation, Idaho State University and the Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education.

See complete reviews of the 2013 winners at the National Outdoor Book Awards at www.noba-web.org.

BUZZ WORDS

Deep Water Soloing

A head-to-head climbing competition on a 50-ft. tall wall with no ropes or safety gear, but rather a swimming pool below to catch falls. The driving force behind bringing the sport to the U.S. from Europe is climber Chris Sharma. Boulderers typically climb on walls up to 20 feet unroped, but go no higher and jump down safely on gymnastic-style crash pads. Sport climbers are used to the heights, but compete attached to a rope to catch their falls. (Source: *OR Show Daily*)

WEB WATCH

TNF Video Celebrates Insatiable Curiosity to Explore

“People will always have a desire to explore what they haven’t seen,” says Dr. Buzz Aldrin in an astounding promotional film for The North Face titled, “The Explorer.” Aldrin goes on to say, “Human beings are not apt to back away from something that is a challenge.”

Drop everything and spend two minutes to see it here:

<http://www.theadventurepost.com/all-posts/buzz-aldrin-reflects-on-mankinds-desire-to-explore/>

Trash Man

Washed up on the remote beaches of southern Alaska are plastics of every shape, size and color, according to Smithsonian.com. There are detergent bottles, cigarette lighters, fishing nets and buoys, oil drums, fly swatters and Styrofoam balls in various states of decay. They come from around the world, adrift in rotating sea currents called gyres, and get snagged in the nooks and crannies of Alaska’s shoreline. Set against a backdrop of trees, grizzly bears and volcanic mountains, these plastics are eye-catching, almost pretty—and yet they are polluting the world’s oceans.

The garbage, dubbed “marine debris” by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, wreaks havoc on marine ecosystems.

In June 2013, a team of artists and scientists set out to see the blight firsthand. Expedition GYRE, a project of the Anchorage Museum and the Alaska SeaLife Center, traveled 450 nautical miles along the coast of the Gulf of Alaska to observe, collect and study marine debris. A companion exhibition, opening in February 2014 at the Anchorage Museum, will showcase artworks made using ocean debris.

For the artists on the GYRE expedition, each day in Alaska was filled with scientific briefings, trash reconnaissance and individual pursuits. All four artists—Mark Dion, Pam Longobardi, Andy Hughes and Karen Larsen—are known for work that explores environmental themes and, more or less explicitly, the pleasures and perils of plastic.

Log on to see Dion's artwork made of plastic bottle caps. On the black sand of an Alaskan beach, he created a collage of bottle caps, sorted by shape and color. It wasn't a finished piece, by any means, but an effort to "learn by seeing." He cast himself as the "proverbial Martian archaeologist," trying to make sense of the detritus of human civilization based on its formal qualities.

See Dion's artwork here: <http://blogs.smithsonianmag.com/artscience/2013/11/artists-join-scientists-on-an-expedition-to-collect-marine-debris/>

ON THE HORIZON

Conrad Anker Emcees Jeff Lowe Fundraiser, Dec. 17, Golden, Colo.

Climber Conrad Anker will emcee a fundraiser to celebrate Jeff Lowe and benefit his documentary film *Metanoia*, narrated by Jon Krakauer, and directed by Jim Aikman. The film is due for release in spring 2014. Lowe was a designer of gear and clothing, a writer, filmmaker, and organizer of events including the Sport Climbing Championships, the X-Games Ice Tower and Ouray Ice Festival. Tickets are \$20-\$25. Bradford Washburn Mountaineering Museum, Golden, Colo. (For more information: Connie Self, jloweclimber@gmail.com, 208 630 4477).

American Alpine Club Honors Chouinard, Feb. 7-8, 2014, Denver

The AAC honors Patagonia founder Yvon Chouinard on Feb. 8 at the Sheraton Denver Downtown. The weekend also includes a panel discussion featuring climber Lynn Hill, moderated by Allison Osius.

(For more information: <http://www.americanalpineclub.org/p/2014-annual-benefit-dinner>)

EN HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

If you're like the staff of *EN*, you have closets full of climbing gear. The attic is stuffed with camping equipment. The garage? Forget about it. Snowshoes, skis, mountain bikes – they hang from every beam and rafter. And then there's the schwag drawer in the kitchen filled with the debris of trade shows long past – eyeglass retainers, stress balls, lip balm, and blinky lights. Ack!

Still, it's never enough. Which is why we bring you our annual Holiday Gift Guide for your friends and loved ones who share a similar love of droolworthy gear. Just don't expect us to recommend soap-on-a-rope or a tie with spouting whales. Far from it. Add these items to your holiday shopping list.

Poor Man's Google Glass – It'll be at least a year until Google Glass comes out. Meanwhile, what's an obnoxious friend or family member to do? Get them Pivothead: Video Recording Eyewear. A 1080p HD 8MP camera is hidden in the bridge above the nose. Hidden, that is, like a third eye. These sunglasses look like what our schlubby Uncle Moishe wears on top of his prescription glasses in Boca. Shoot HD video hands-free. (\$278-\$299, www.pivothead.com)

Hands Schmands – The Horological Machine No. 3 from MB&F in Geneva costs \$91,000 but don't expect this timepiece to come with a watch face and hands. Its spaceship like design features revolving number barrels representing hours and minutes that are housed in separate cockpits, while ceramic ball-bearing systems resemble rocket engines. It weighs more than one-third of a pound, which may be why they only make just 20 HM3 watches a year. Get it for the holidays or as a bon voyage gift for anyone traveling for \$250,000 on Richard Branson's upcoming space slingshot. (\$91,000, www.mbandf.com)

Better Than Commando – As we all know, women explorers must be ready to leave at a moment's notice to go climb Everest or K2. SPairz are 100% cotton women's underwear that are compressed and shrink-wrapped so a woman can break into these puppies on the way to the airport. The panties are compressed into a package about the size of a business card or a package of gum and are about 1 cm in depth. A great stocking stuffer. Fashionable? Not so much. (\$10 each, www.spairz.com)

iGeek – From the Ministry of Silly Hats comes a gizmo that allows a friend or loved one to wear their smartphone on their head. It's called a Giddydeo from Tribbit and features an adjustable grippy strap that creates a tight hold and works with any smartphone. Sure, it looks funny, but we're guessing it comes in handy when you're belaying and prefer to use two hands. (\$24.99, www.mytribbit.com)

The Perfect Gift for Dirtbags – The perfect gift for that dirtbag climber in your life is, well, a dirtbag. Actually it's called a Scrubba Wash Bag – a flexible washboard in a sealable bag. You just press down and rub clothes against the Scrubba wash bag's internal flexible washboard for 30 seconds for a quick traveler wash or for three minutes for a machine quality wash. (\$64.95, www.thescrubba.com)

Why Can't a Woman Be More Like a Man? – That's what Rex Harrison sang in *My Fair Lady*. We couldn't agree more. The EN Holiday Gift Guide would be incomplete if we didn't suggest at least one gift that allows a woman to pee anywhere a man could. The Whiz Easy comes from those resourceful Canadians who no doubt find themselves in bathroom-challenged remote Nunavut. Soft and pliable, it fits the outer curves of the human body comfortably without nasty flow-backs, splashes or spills. Besides, if it ever does leak, you could always break into that extra pair of SPairz to mop up. (\$32.45, www.whizeasy.com)

EXPEDITION CLASSIFIEDS

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