

EXPEDITION NEWS

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EXPEDITION NEWS, now in its 16th year, 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.

Editor's Note

We can't just sit around while everyone else explores the world. Finally, the time has come for the "trip of our dreams." *EN* travels to Antarctica with Students on Ice this month. Log onto www.expeditionnews.blogspot.com for periodic updates, and be sure to catch our February issue for a full report. Think South.

CYCLING THE WORLD

This month, Dr. Steve Fabes of London, sets off on a five-year solo journey to cycle the length of six of the world's seven continents, all in aid of health charity Merlin.

While others are attempting to keep their New Year's resolutions with a weekly trip to the gym, Fabes, 29, will be burning 6,000 calories every day – traveling unaccompanied, he'll have only his own willpower and his MP3 to keep him going. Cycling up to 100 miles between dawn and dusk, over five years Fabes will cover 50,000 miles – a distance equivalent to twice the circumference of the earth.

The round-the-world trip will see Fabes cycle through over 60 countries, from Australia to Sudan and Zambia. Passing through some of the poorest countries in the world, the London-based Guys and St. Thomas's doctor will stop off at deadly disease hotspots as well as health centers supported by Merlin – an aid agency that gets remote clinics back up, saving lives in crisis countries. Fabes aims to raise £50,000 to support the charity's life-saving work.

With an interest in tropical medicine, Fabes' route is planned through regions affected by 14 neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) – a group of ancient, largely parasitic infections that occur in areas of poverty and affect as many as one billion people worldwide. Over the course of his journey, he will visit a number of remote hospitals and clinics to witness

the impact of these infections firsthand, from leprosy to guinea worm, raising awareness about these deadly diseases which receive little exposure.

The CyclingThe6 six continent challenge is supported by a number of sponsors including Iwantoneofthose.com. The Web site is equipping Fabes with a range of travel gadgets from solar powered battery chargers to bicycle MP3 speakers. (For more information: Steve Fabes, www.cyclingthe6.com, steve@cyclingthe6.com, 07890307301).

EVEREST HIP HOP EXPEDITION

This spring Don Healy, a New Yorker, hopes to be the first person to summit Mt. Everest with a total hip replacement. Easing into retirement in 2006 from a career as an inventor, entrepreneur and owner of a sign and display company, Healy finally started serious exercise for the first time in his life. After getting into shape, he took up mountaineering in early 2007 - something he dreamed of doing since reading Sir John Hunt and Edmund Hillary's *The Conquest of Everest*, at age 10.

After two training climbs with IMCS and Alpine Ascents, Healy scheduled a climb of Mt. Rainier for August 2007. Five days before the expedition, he broke his left hip in a serious bicycle accident. It was pinned together the same day but the repair failed and, after eleven weeks on crutches, Healy underwent a total hip replacement. The day of the accident Healy feared he wouldn't be able to walk again, much less climb high peaks. But in January 2008, just three months after the hip implant, he resumed climbing. By June 2009 he had climbed Rainier, Cayambe, Cotopaxi, Chimborazo, Kilimanjaro, and Denali.

"My broken hip has made me more determined than ever to meet the goal of being on Everest on my 65th birthday – May 18, 2010," said Healy, who is married with two grown children. He hopes to demonstrate that neither age nor physical set-backs need limit ones goals. Sponsorship of \$75,000 is being sought. (For more information: 917 449 2660, dhealy@vgs-inc.com, www.everesthiphop.com)

EXPEDITION UPDATE

Song for the Road – Not many expeditions get their own theme song. But then, the Trans-Americas Journey is not your average adventure (see *EN*, April 2006). In April 2006, travelers Karen Catchpole (writer) and Eric Mohl (photographer) left their jobs and apartment in New York City and embarked on the Trans-Americas Journey, a five year, 200,000 mile cross-country and cross-continental drive. The overland journey is an exploration of the byways and back roads of North America, Central America and South America and a search for the people, places and things that make every place special. For over 1,000 days, they've been on a true Pan-American road trip.

Catchpole's writing posted to www.trans-americas.com includes new hotel reviews, a profile of the town of Zacatecas, Mexico, which appeared in the *Dallas Morning News*,

and a piece for *Every Day with Rachael Ray* magazine which suggests four great cities in which to celebrate New Year's Eve.

In December 2008, the Trans-Americas Journey wrapped up its time in the U.S. and Canada and crossed the border into Mexico where Catchpole and Mohl are now exploring, shooting and writing before venturing further south through Latin America until they run out of road. Log on to hear their instrumental theme song by Scott Metzger.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Wilderness is a resource that can shrink but not grow ... the creation of new wilderness in the full sense of the word is impossible." – Aldo Leopold (Quote courtesy of American Hiking Society's Paperless Trail newsletter).

EXPEDITION FOCUS

Trip Report: No Water No Life's Mara River Basin Expedition September 15 - October 15, 2009

The No Water No Life photographic/video team of Alison Jones and Alison Fast returned this fall from Kenya and Tanzania with a thorough documentation of the Mara River Basin's urgent issues of degradation and the grassroots solutions being addressed. The group, based in New York, combines photography and science to raise public awareness of the quality, availability and usage of fresh water resources.

Jones says, "My greatest concern is today's degradation and loss of fresh water, the most essential of resources. One and a half billion people today live without safe drinking water." She tells an AMC meeting in Westport, Conn., recently, "If we don't address communities without water, the world will become an ugly place."

The following is the Trip Report from the Mara River Basin Expedition:

Recently, the Mara River Basin has been especially hard hit during East Africa's extended drought. Jones and Fast documented the Mara River's critically low water levels and pollution, as they traveled from its Kenyan source in the Mau Forest to its Tanzanian outlet into Lake Victoria. The degradation of the Mara River covered by No Water No Life has been caused by deforestation, climate change, unregulated water extraction, human and livestock effluent and agricultural runoff.

The team filmed interviews with 35 stakeholders and scientists committed to mitigating these threats via better regulation of water extraction during low flows, corrective protection of the Mau Forest catchment areas, more efficient irrigation, afforestation, rain harvesting and establishment of riverine corridors. All agree that while this is certainly a critical time for the Mara River Basin, its inhabitants and its renowned wildlife, there are reasons to be positive. Team results:

- Captured 52 hours of filmed interviews and B-roll, and 200 gigs of still photographs.
- Shared concerns over water usage and quality with partners upstream and

downstream.

- Established ongoing partnerships between stakeholders, stewards and scientists.
- Compared the Mara River issues with other local watersheds.
- Noted the role of the Mara River within the greater Nile River Basin.

No Water No Life appreciates all who have supported this expedition, especially James Robertson of Ker and Downey Safaris, Houston (www.kerdowney.com) who provided logistical assistance. (For more information and further updates: www.nowater-nolife.org).

MEDIA MATTERS

Scientists Dazzled – Years of studying volcanoes and imagining a deep sea-floor eruption didn't prepare University of Hawaii geologist-geochemist Ken Rubin for the "awesome spectacle" of seeing one first-hand, he says.

"I've never seen an oceanographic science party and science vessel crew more mesmerized by the results of the ongoing observations during an expedition," said Rubin, lead of the volcanology and rock geochemistry team that recorded an eruption nearly 4,000 feet below the surface – the deepest ever discovered – in the South Pacific.

According to Helen Altonn of the Honolulu *Star Bulletin* (Dec. 21), University of Washington chemical oceanographer Joseph Resing led a rapid-response cruise to record the West Mata volcanic eruption, discovered in May in an area between Fiji, Tonga and Samoa.

Resing, who earned master's and doctor's degrees in chemical oceanography at UH in 1992 and 1997, said the scientists found a type of lava never seen before erupting from a volcano and for the first time observed molten lava flowing across the deep sea floor.

Results of the expedition were presented at the recent American Geophysical Union meeting in San Francisco.

The scientists operated from the University of Washington's research vessel *Thomas Thompson* and used *Jason*, an underwater robot remotely operated by the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and National Science Foundation funded the mission.

Poison Soup – Turns out it was the entire can, not just the solder, that likely poisoned the provisions of the 19th century Franklin expedition. Testing at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, confirmed in late December that a sealed can of ox-cheek soup found on an island roughly where Capt. John Franklin and 128 crew died in the Canadian Arctic had been sealed with lead solder. But the X-rays also revealed the can itself was full of lead, suggesting another source of toxins leaching into the preserves of the icebound sailors, who perished in 1846, according to a story in by Wade Hemsworth in Toronto's *The Star* (Dec. 16).

Franklin was trying to find a Northwest Passage – a link between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans – and sailed with thousands of cans. Bones and hair of Franklin crew were later found to have incredibly high levels of lead. Ironically the canned provisions taken on the expedition were "really a high point of technology" at the time, said curator Ken Lister of the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto. McMaster analysis of a thawed sample of the soup suggests a lead content 1,000 times larger than allowable levels today.

Butter Side Up – Speaking of nasty foods, the world's oldest block of butter has been discovered at the Antarctic base of ill-fated British explorer Captain Robert Scott. The frozen spread was found in a sack in a former pony stable nearly a century after the adventurer's mission to the South Pole. Captain Scott and his four colleagues died on their way back from the pole after coming second to Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen.

Restoration workers also discovered shelves of tinned food, bedding and clothing in the Britons' Cape Evans hut. The butter, however, is the only example of fresh foods used by the explorers, according to a story in the U.K.'s *Daily Mail* (Dec. 17).

Asked what the reaction was when they came across the cloth bag containing two blocks of butter, Lizzie Meek of the Antarctic Heritage Trust said, "What's amazing is how strong it smells. Nearly 100 years old – very, very strong. Possibly a bit too strong? I'm not sure I'd want it on my toast."

Meek continued, "Hopefully, it will remain preserved for another 100 years if we leave it in the stables."

Captain Robert Falcon Scott, also known as "Scott of the Antarctic," led two expeditions to the region from 1901 to 1904 and again from 1910 to 1913. On that second expedition he and his men reached the Pole on Jan. 17, 1912, only to find Amundsen had already arrived there. During the return journey to his base hut Scott's group ran into trouble, and all perished from the extreme cold, hunger and exhaustion.

The Toffs Get Going – David de Rothschild could be "lazing around, doing pretty much what he wants. But what he wants is to save the world," according to a story in the *Financial Times* (Dec. 5-6) by William Leith. His latest plan is to sail across the Pacific in a boat made from plastic water bottles. He has named the boat *Plastiki* in homage to *Kon-Tiki*, the raft on which Norwegian adventurer Thor Heyerdahl crossed the Pacific in 1947. The explorer plans to sail through the Eastern Garbage Patch, an area of the ocean that lies somewhere between California and Hawaii. It is twice the size of Texas. Most importantly, it is full of plastic waste, writes Leith. Says de Rothschild, "I drive across the Golden Gate and I look right, across the Pacific, and I see container ships 200 feet high. And there's definitely a pang of nervousness and anxiety."

The Good Book – Turns out that the Bible is one of three favorite books for Discovery Channel host Josh Bernstein, CEO of BOSS, the Boulder Outdoor Survival School based in Boulder, Utah. He tells Patrice Gaines of *USA Today* (Dec. 7), "Of the 50 or so

mysteries I've explored for my TV series, a half-dozen of them have had a biblical connection: the Ark of the Covenant, King Solomon's mines and the Queen of Sheba." His other favorites are *Lonesome Dove* by Larry McMurtry and Edward Abbey's *The Monkey Wrench Gang*.

EXPEDITION MARKETING

Lofty Sponsor

PrimaLoft Insulation Technology announced its 2010 sponsorship campaign last month, which includes world-class athletic events such as the Ouray Ice Festival, the North Face Masters Series, the Adirondack International Mountaineering Festival, the Adirondack Backcountry Ski Festival, The *Backpacker Magazine* - Get Out More Tour, and the Banff Mountain Film and Book Festivals among others. Highlights:

- The 15th Annual Ouray Ice Festival, Jan. 7-10 in Ouray, Colo., is the biggest climbing festival in North America, featuring world-class ice climbing athletes and clinics. (www.ourayicefestival.com).
- The 14th Annual Adirondack International Mountaineering Festival hosted by specialty outdoor retailer, The Mountaineer on Jan. 15-17 in Keene Valley, N.Y., features world-class alpinists who speak and lead instructional clinics on ice climbing, mountaineering, snowshoeing and avalanche awareness. (www.mountaineer.com).
- The *Backpacker Magazine* - Get Out More Tour is a one of a kind cross country mobile tour that visits over 70 retailers in 30 states to educate consumers about the skills and equipment they need to Get Out More! Tour dates run from May through November. (www.getoutmore2009.com).
- Banff Mountain Film and Book Festivals is an international film and literary competition featuring the world's best footage and literature on mountain subjects. (www.banffcentre.ca).

LOWA Sponsors Whittaker Boots Display

Visitors to the American Mountaineering Museum in Golden, Colo., can now get a first-hand look at the original LOWA boots that famed climber Jim Whittaker wore as he summited Mount Everest in 1963. LOWA has become a museum sponsor ensuring that the boots remain on permanent display.

Whittaker has numerous achievements on his resume. In 1963, he was the first North American to summit Mount Everest. As CEO of Recreational Equipment, Inc. (REI), he led the company through years of record-setting growth. He organized and led the first successful expedition to summit K2 – the world's second highest mountain. In 1965, he guided Bobby Kennedy up the newly-named Mount Kennedy, helping him become the first person to summit the peak. In 1990, he led the historic International Peace Climb

that put climbers from the U.S., Russia, and China on the summit of Everest in the name of world peace.

Get Lucky

For 16 years, *EN* has told numerous tales of woe from the expedition and adventure community. Now comes at least one way to turn lemons into lemonade: Travel Guard's World's Unluckiest Traveler contest. Every month, the travel insurance company is giving away a Flip MinoHD camcorder to the unluckiest Traveler with the top entry of the month as voted on by the Web surfing public. At the end of the year, all winning entries will be back in a head-to-head showdown for the title of World's Unluckiest Traveler and the grand prize — a \$10,000 Ultimate Dream Vacation. The contest continues through the end of 2010. (For more information: www.worldsunluckiesttraveler.com).

Sell Your Soul

You've probably seen the ads for Eddie Bauer's First Ascent "Be First – Get Sponsored" competition (www.firstascent.com). Now for the good news/bad news: the good news is you received sponsorship. The bad news is you received sponsorship from Eddie Bauer. Readers of *EN* were stunned to read the "legal info" buried on the Web site. Here's the key paragraph of concern:

"Submission of an application constitutes the applicant's irrevocable assignment and transfer to Eddie Bauer any and all rights, title, and interest in and to the application, and any components thereof, including, without limitation, all intellectual property rights. Applicant agrees to execute all assignments or other documents and do all things necessary to enable Eddie Bauer to enforce and perfect such rights, title and interest in and to the application. Submission of an application also grants Eddie Bauer the right in perpetuity to publish, use, adapt, edit and/or modify the application and application materials in any way, in commerce and in any and all media worldwide now known or hereinafter developed, without limitation and without further consent, consideration or notice to the applicant."

If we're reading this correctly, Eddie Bauer would own the intellectual property rights to anything submitted with an application (e.g., expedition name, photographs, video, etc.) whether the applicant is sponsored or not. This seems extreme, to say the least. It would seem to virtually preclude going to any other sponsors. It's another example where it pays to read the fine print.

Too Much Free Stuff is Never Enough

Women are being sought by the Outdoor Industries Women's Coalition (OIWC) to volunteer at the two big trade shows coming up in January – the Outdoor Retailer Winter Market in Salt Lake, Jan. 21-24, and the SnowSports Industries America Show (SIA) in Denver, Jan. 28-30. Volunteers receive a badge for entry and – this is just a wild guess

now – lots of free stuff, a.k.a. swag (or as we say in Yiddish, “schwag”). (For more information: OR Winter Market, sgrimes@oiwc.org; SIA Show, aluther@oiwc.org)

No Butts About It

Tired of the ubiquitous The North Face logo staring back at you from someone’s shoulder in line at Costco? Is the brand becoming, well, a little too popular on the subway or among non-climbing, non-outdoorsy pretzel vendors on Fifth Avenue? Well, just to knock the mighty TNF down a notch is a look-alike brand called The South Butt with a line of t-shirts, fleece jackets, shorts and hats.

TNF is none too pleased. Last month, The North Face Apparel Corp. issued holiday greetings to The South Butt, LLC by filing a federal lawsuit in St. Louis seeking to enjoin The South Butt from continuing to market and sell its parody apparel product line.

The suit, filed on December 10, 2009 in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri, also seeks damages from The South Butt, its founder, college freshman Jimmy Winkelmann, and a local St. Louis pharmacy through which on-site retail sales of The South Butt apparel are made.

The South Butt, a small St. Louis-based company, was started by 18-year-old Jimmy Winkelmann, to help his parents pay his college tuition at a state college. It puts out parody products which serve to effectively spoof North Face, employing the tag line, “Never Stop Relaxing” in contrast to the North Face line, “Never Stop Exploring.”

“The South Butt has previously made it clear to the North Face that the consuming public is insightful enough to know the difference between a face and a butt,” said Albert S. Watkins, legal counsel for The South Butt and Jimmy Winkelmann. “In every sense, The South Butt is prepared to assume the proverbial position and take everything that North Face thrusts at it,” added Watkins.

The skirmish between the two companies has garnered international media attention and has effectively been characterized as a contemporary Samson versus Goliath showdown.

The South Butt has initiated a tongue in cheek (pun intended) Internet challenge to hone the skills of the public in discerning the difference between a face and a butt. See it at: <http://apps.facebook.com/south-butt-challenge/>

Wary of TNF’s legal eagles, the South Butt folks offer this Web site disclaimer, “We are not in any fashion related to nor do we want to be confused with The North Face Apparel Corp. or its products sold under ‘The North Face’ brand. If you are unable to discern the difference between a face and a butt, we encourage you to buy North Face products.” (For more information: www.thesouthbutt.com)

EXPEDITION INK

Twilight of the Ice Bear – “The new threat to the ice bear, climate change, is so profound that it can make a person yearn for the days of simpler perils like sport hunting,” writes Bruce Barcott in his review of the new book by Richard Ellis, *On Thin Ice – The Changing World of the Polar Bear* (Alfred A. Knopf, 2009). “Two-thirds of the world’s polar bears – some 22,000 – could disappear by midcentury,” according to the review in *The New York Times Book Review* (Dec. 13). Among the facts served up by Ellis: polar bears can smell seals, their main prey, through two feet of ice. This olfactory sensitivity is what makes pepper spray so effective against an attacking bear. Its nose is its weak spot. It doesn’t have many others.

WEB WATCH

Tweet This

Want to stay current on various expeditions in between issues of *Expedition News*? Here’s a tip for members of the Twittersphere: search #expedition. In late December there were dozens of expeditions posting tweets. Want to follow *EN*? Don’t bother. Truth be told, we’re not half as interesting as actor Ashton Kutcher, followed by 4.2 million people last time we looked.

BUZZ WORDS

MountainSexual – Similar to metrosexual but one who lives in the mountains or otherwise pursues the outdoors adventure lifestyle. Kind of a cleaned-up granola, a Woodsy GQ kinda guy with a splash of bohemian. Knows that he doesn't have to look or smell like a dirtbag to enjoy climbing, hiking, cycling, skiing (all forms), snowshoeing, etc. Probably reads *Men's Journal*, *Outside*, *Outside's Go*, *National Geographic Adventure*, even *Wallpaper** and *Dwell*. Brands: Patagonia, Keen, Kuhl, The North Face, Mountain Hardwear, Marmot, Mountain Khakis. Strong environmental ethic. Drives a well-maintained truck, performance SUV, or cross-over when absolutely necessary but walks or rides a bicycle whenever possible. Works out in gym but primarily to be in shape for outdoor pursuits. Shuns chain stores and shops in outdoor specialty stores such as The Trailhead in Buena Vista, Colo. (Source: www.UrbanDictionary.com)

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Scotch That – Last month we misspelled the name of the two cases of Highland malt whisky left by Ernest Shackleton in Antarctica beneath his 1907-09 base camp hut. It’s Charles Mackinlay & Co. Scotch.

EXPEDITION CLASSIFIEDS

Advertise in Expedition News – For just 50 cents a word, you can reach an estimated 10,000 readers of America’s only monthly newsletter celebrating the world of expeditions on land, in space, and beneath the sea. Join us as we take a sometimes

irreverent look at the people and projects making Expedition News. Frequency discounts are available. (For more information: blumassoc@aol.com).

Compression Socks Give Your Feet a Boost – Competitors from runners to triathletes to skiers are increasingly turning to compression socks for an edge that helps them recover faster in the process. CW-X Compression Support Socks, from Wacoal Sports Science Corporation, makers of CW-X® Conditioning Wear, use seamless, variable compression Torex four-way stretch fabric to provide targeted support to increase circulation in the feet and lower legs. A built-in Support Web™ supports the calf muscles and arch of the foot, and stabilizes the ankle joint. This results in reduced fatigue and quicker recovery from strenuous athletic activity. (www.cw-x.com)

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