

EXPEDITION NEWS



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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.

STUDYING THE “GHOST PEAKS” OF ANTARCTICA

A research team is attempting to find an explanation for why there is a great mountain range buried under the White Continent. The Gamburtsevs match the Alps in scale but no one has ever seen them because they are covered by up to 2-1/2 miles of ice.

Geologists struggle to understand how such a massif could have formed and persisted in the middle of Antarctica. Now, an international team is setting out on a deep-field survey to try to get some answers. The group comprises scientists, engineers, pilots and support staff from the UK, the U.S., Germany, Australia, China and Japan.

“You can almost think about it as exploring another planet - but on Earth,” Dr. Fausto Ferraccioli from the British Antarctic Survey tells the *BBC News* last month.

“This region is a complete enigma. It’s in the middle of the continent. Most mountain ranges are on the edges of continents, and we really can’t understand what these mountains are doing in the center.” The AGAP (Antarctica’s Gamburtsev Province) project will establish two camps from where the team will map the subglacial range using surface and airborne instruments.

The Gamburtsevs were discovered by a Soviet team making a seismic survey on a traverse across the ice in the late 1950s. The hidden rocky prominence was totally unexpected; scientists thought the interior of the continent would be relatively flat.

Two survey aircraft will sweep back and forth across the ice to map the shape of the mountains. The planes will be

CATLIN ARCTIC SURVEY TO MEASURE ARCTIC SEA ICE

Pen Hadow and Ann Daniels of the UK will help scientists calculate how long the dwindling ice cap could last. A specially built radar will take 10 million measurements of the permanent Arctic Ocean sea ice early next year. The third team member is specialist polar photographer Martin Hartley. The cost of the project is an estimated \$4.86 million.

The team will measure the water column under the sea ice and record density measurements of the snow and ice over a three-month period starting in February. Samples of the water, snow, ice and air will also be taken. Millions of readings of the floating ice’s thickness will be taken over a 750-mile route.

The team will manually drill through the sea ice to take supplementary measurements of the thickness and density of both the ice and overlying snow layers. A data uplink system will transmit findings to scientists direct from the ice via satellite. Once completed, the project’s findings will be made available for the United Nations Climate Change Conference of Parties in Copenhagen next year.

Current estimates of how long ice will be a year-round feature around the North Pole vary considerably – with scientific predictions ranging between five and 100 years.

Hadow, the first explorer to trek solo and unsupported from northern Canada to the North Pole (2003), tells the *BBC* the Arctic Ocean was “not only an astonishingly beautiful place but a globally unique environment of immense significance to the balance of the Earth’s whole eco-system.

“Experienced explorers are the only people who have the expertise to undertake a survey of this magnitude and help science in this way,” he added.

equipped with ice-penetrating radar and instruments to measure the local gravitational and magnetic fields.

Information on the deeper structure of the Gamburtsevs will come from a network of seismometers that will listen to earthquake signals passing through the rock from the other side of the globe. Another important aim of the project is to find a place to drill for ancient ices. By examining bubbles of air trapped in compacted snow, it is possible for researchers to glean details about past environmental conditions. (For more information: <http://www.antarctica.ac.uk>, <http://agap-north.blogspot.com/>) ▲▲

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Daniels, a mother of 14-year-old triplets and a five-year-old daughter, was a member of the first all-women teams to trek to both the North and South Poles. The trio will pull sledges and swim between ice-floes from their start-point – 470 miles offshore of northern Canada to the North Geographic Pole – in temperatures from 32 degrees F. down to minus 58 degrees F.

The U.S. Naval Postgraduate School, the NASA IceSat Mission and the Department of Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics at the University of Cambridge are all involved.

The project will help fill the current gap in existing measurement studies by satellites and submarines – which cannot differentiate between ice and snow layers.

Last year saw record melting of the Arctic ice cap to 39% below the average minimum, causing experts to predict the Arctic Ocean could be ice free in summer within 25 years. (For more information: www.catlinarcticsurvey.com) ▲▲

Quote of the Month

“The mountains are not stadiums where I satisfy my ambition to achieve, they are cathedrals where I practice my religion.”

– Anatoli Boukreev, *Off-Piste Magazine*, January 2008

EXPEDITION UPDATE

Branson Vows to Try Again

British billionaire Sir Richard Branson sailed into Bermuda grinning and waving on Oct. 24 – undefeated by a “hellish” failed attempt to break a trans-Atlantic speed record in a monohull. (See *EN*, October 2008).

“We won’t give up,” said the 58-year-old adventurer and entrepreneur as he stepped off the 99-ft racing yacht *Virgin Money* in St. George’s. “Next time we’ll go the whole way,” he tells Bermuda’s *Royal Gazette*.

Sir Richard was co-skippering the vessel on a voyage from New York to Lizard Point in Cornwall, England, aimed at breaking the record for a trans-Atlantic crossing in a single-hulled sailboat in less than six days, 17 hours, 52 minutes and 39 seconds. But 40-ft. waves and gale force winds forced the team to abandon the bid about 600 miles from New York and after just a day-and-a-half at sea.

“We were only about 30 hours in when we started having problems and ripped the main sail.” Admitting that he succumbed to seasickness, he said, “It was hellish actually. For about 24 hours we just had one hell of a storm but you need that kind of weather to break the record.”

He said he had every intention of making the attempt again, possibly in as little as three weeks time, if the weather conditions are right.

Branson’s son, Sam, who has been on three Arctic expeditions, said he watched in horror as the spinnaker sail “exploded” in the storm. “Records wouldn’t be so prestigious to break if they were easy,” he said.

Bancroft Encourages Curiosity

“An explorer’s mind has to be open. You’ve got to be curious about everything. That’s my No. 1 tool when I go around the world,” said former 1986 Will Steger North Pole Expedition team member Ann Bancroft who is sharing her experiences with schoolchildren in periodic educational talks. Bancroft was recently a keynote speaker at the South Central Service Cooperative’s Science and Nature Conference at Gustavus Adolphus College’s Lund Arena in Saint Peter, Minn.

Bancroft, the first woman to reach the North Pole on foot by dogsled, told 1,000 students and their chaperones, “When we got there, nothing was there. No fat man dressed in red, nothing.” She continued, “That trip gave me the courage to plan my own expedition to the other side of the world.” In 1992 she led a four-woman expedition to the South Pole on skis. And in 2001, she and Liv Arnesen crossed the entire continent on skis, becoming the first women to do so. Next up for the Bancroft is an expedition to Antarctica in 2011 with an international group of women explorers from each populated continent. ▲▲

EXPEDITION NOTES

R ight Stuff Test Pilot Honored – If there was one bright spot on Wall Street last month it was the Lowell Thomas Awards dinner, an event hosted by The Explorers Club and sponsored by Rolex, that recognizes those who pushed the limits of discovery, knowledge and human endurance. Held at the posh Cipriani Wall Street, the fundraiser honored astronauts, climbers, and one of the greatest test pilots of all time, Brig. Gen. Charles E. “Chuck” Yeager. The aviator, now a spry 85, made aviation history on Oct. 14, 1947 when he broke the sound barrier, exceeding Mach 1 in the rocket-powered Bell X-1 named *Glamorous Glennis*, after his wife.

During his acceptance speech – it turns out he knew legendary broadcaster Lowell Thomas and once spent five days at his home in Pawling, N.Y. – Yeager shared his philosophy of life, “Rules are made for people unable to make up their own.”

NASA astronaut Leroy Chiao, Ph.D., who has spent 239 days in space, including six spacewalks, said most of the time in space was spent taking photos of earth – some 16,000 images in all. “Every part of the earth is beautiful in its own way,” he said, “everywhere looks peaceful and wonderful even if intellectually you know there’s hunger, war and strife.”

Chiao dispelled the myth that you can see the Great Wall of China from space. “You can’t see it with the naked eye, but you can make it out from photos.”

Aviator John King introduced his wife and fellow pilot Martha, named one of 100 Distinguished Aviation Heroes in the first century of flight. “You’ve heard that behind every great man is a woman? That’s wrong,” he said. “In front of every great woman is some guy blocking her view who doesn’t have a clue.” Later Martha would say, “A passion for aviation is a wonderful thing to have because nothing has inspired the world as much as aviation.”

Astronaut Scott E. Parazynski, M.D., a veteran of five Space Shuttle missions, told of one of the most challenging and dangerous EVA’s ever performed. He was positioned by a robotic boom farther than crewmembers had ever ventured from the safety of their airlock, and while there had to repair a fully energized solar array wing using so-called “cufflinks” – essentially large sutures to stabilize the array. Things didn’t go quite so well for Parazynski when he attempted Everest last spring. He blew out a disk at 24,000 feet. “Luckily I had an unlimited supply of ice,” he said. “Every now and then I would lie down to cool off my back.”

Usually as these benefit dinners go, the live auctions are dead-ly. Embarrassing. A necessary evil as organizations try to raise as much as they can from a captive audience who’ve already

shelled out \$350 per ticket or more. This one was different. It was pretty funny. Swann Auction Galleries of New York sent over Nicholas “Shecky” Lowry who loosened up the crowd by first auctioning a \$30 bottle of Grey Goose vodka for \$275. “Bailout, schmaloout. You can drink this and explore from your own couch,” he said. Lowry later auctioned a ride in a Russian MiG-15 for \$1,700, a one-day ride in an expedition balloon in the Mojave desert for \$2,000, and a 20-night voyage from Patagonia to Cape Town for \$15,000.

First Ascent on China’s Mt. Siguniangd – Chad Kellogg, recipient of an American Alpine Club 2008 Lyman Spitzer Cutting Edge Award, and climbing partner Dylan Johnson, have completed the first ascent of the southwest ridge of Mt. Siguniang (20,505-ft./6,250 m) in Sichuan, China. The two men spent Sept. 21-30 climbing the 72-pitch route and descending, and they suffered through wet storms and lack of food. They each lost 20 to 30 pounds during the effort, according to *AAC E-News*. The climb was bittersweet for Kellogg, who was in China last year to attempt the same route when he learned of the death of his wife, Lara, in Alaska. They report the tourism industry in Sichuan is reeling from the devastating earthquake in May and the political crisis in Tibet. Yet traveling there is safe and enjoyable. Read the entire story by logging onto www.climbing.com.

Dinosaur Graveyard Found – A “dinosaur graveyard” full of fossils has been discovered in a former river bed in Utah, presenting an opportunity for a decade’s worth of Jurassic research by paleontologists, it was announced last month. Scientists and technicians with the Utah Thornbury Dinosaur Expedition unearthed an abundance of sauropod (an herbivorous long-necked dinosaur) finds, as well as the bones of several carnivorous dinosaurs, said paleontologist Luis Chiappe, director of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County’s Dinosaur Institute.

The team, led by the museum, also discovered nearby a 5-foot humerus (arm) bone from a brachiosaur, a gigantic long-necked dinosaur. The graveyard’s star discovery thus far is “Gnatialie,” a well-preserved skeleton of a 150 million-year-old sauropod. Tracks of Jurassic Period sauropods at the site in San Juan County were found near tracks of carnivorous theropods and herbivorous ornithopods of the early Cretaceous.

More notably, the sandstone site also features tracks belonging to a European stegosaur, named *Deltapodus*. Chiappe said, “The *Deltapodus* tracks have never been found in North America.”

The discovery of these trackways is part of an international effort to track the migration patterns of dinosaurs following the split of Pangea, a supercontinent that existed during the Paleozoic and Mesozoic eras, during the Jurassic. Major findings from the expedition will be featured in the museum’s

newly renovated dinosaur galleries, set to open in 2011. The museum has one of the largest collections of dinosaur and Mesozoic fossils in the world.

Team Members Wanted for Earth-Mars Cave Detection Project – Have any experience in caving, rock climbing and/or mountaineering? Then the Earth-Mars Cave Detection Project wants you. Candidates must be physically fit, not claustrophobic, own caving equipment (or be willing to purchase it), and are available to commit to at least one 10-day stint. Fieldwork will be executed from Jan. 12-Feb. 28. Field objectives will include placing temperature/barometric pressure sensors in caves and on the surface, and mapping caves using newly developed cartographic techniques. Work will be conducted near Barstow, Calif. (For more information: Jut Wynne, 928 523 7757, jut.wynne@nau.edu, or see his mummified bat photos at jjudsonwynne.blogspot.com).

New Institute Will Preserve Remote Pacific Islands – Edmundo Edwards of Chile/Easter Island and Lynn Danaher of Friday Harbor, Wash., have created the Pacific Islands Research Institute (PIRI), a 501(c)(3) non-profit to fund their research and upcoming expedition. PIRI is dedicated to the study, understanding and preservation of the unique cultural heritage and fragile environment of the remote islands of the Pacific Ocean. Current efforts are focused on Raivavae, Rapa Nui (Easter Island) and Papua New Guinea. Along with Dr. Nancy Sullivan of Madang, Papua New Guinea, they plan to return to the PNG's Upper Karawari region in May 2009.

In 2008 Edwards and Sullivan established the camps and contacts with the local people of the region to better access the remote tribe they plan to study. They also completed a study of the cave paintings in the area. In 2009 they plan to return to a more remote valley to study and make contact with the Meakambut tribe of hunter-gathers. They plan to record and film their rituals, cave paintings and the everyday life of this pristine culture.

Their long-term plan for PIRI is to impart knowledge of the special environments, history, and varied cultures of the Pacific islands through a series of educational programs including slideshow lectures, and documentary films and photo exhibits. To date, a documentary film about Raivavae and Papua New Guinea is in post-production and they are compiling a collection of over 8,000 photographs into an ethnographic record of Raivavae and the cave paintings of PNG.

They also plan to translate Edwards' 35 years of research on Rapa-Nui from Spanish into English. In the future they hope to offer lectures, presentations and film documentation to the general public and school groups. They believe it is imperative to educate people to help them understand the importance of preservation and continued research in these remote isolated environments. (For more information: 360 472 1050, islandlynx@aol.com).

Climbers Count When it Comes to Studying Lichen – The Lichen Inventory Project, a partnership between the American Alpine Club and the National Park Service in Yosemite Valley, has yielded fascinating results and a flood of press coverage.

The project ran this year from Sept. 1-21. Climbers gathered lichen samples and assisted NPS scientists in hard-to-reach locations. About 100 species previously unknown to Yosemite Valley have been sent to Oregon State University for further testing and identification, according to *AAC E-News*. Scientists also learned that the black- and rust-colored streaks alongside Vernal Falls (and possibly other Yosemite waterfalls) contained living species, not just colored minerals. "Already we have doubled the number of species known to be here," said the NPS' Niki Nicholas in an *Associated Press* interview. "But we know we have lots more."

The AP story about the research on Sept. 24 was widely printed around the country and even internationally. Linda McMillan, chair of the AAC's Yosemite Committee, said, "We mainly sampled areas on the south (shadier and moister) side of the Valley and we were extremely careful to never chip any samples from any part of any existing climbing routes. So if any new species were discovered, they were not discovered on any established route. Also, folks need to realize that 'new species' may not be particularly rare. It's just that the NPS scientists have never inventoried the miles of cliffs in the Valley before."

Lichenologist Martin Hutten told the *AP*, "It's important to know what our baseline flora and fauna are before we lose it, and lichen are a good baseline." Lichen also can be a good indicator of the volume of air pollutants in the park.

Rotarians Seek Advice – The Rotary International Fellowship of Mountain Climbing and Hiking is seeking input on ways to increase collaborative efforts aimed at providing humanitarian support to rural communities affected by eco-tourism. Rotarians Royal Robbins and Bruce Ward are reaching out to mountaineers around the world and any suggestions are welcome. (For more information: Bruce@chooseoutdoors.org). ▲

EXPEDITION FOCUS

Trip Report: Cruz del Condor Expedition Navigates Peru's Upper Colca Canyon

By Eugene Buchanan

The 27th anniversary of the first exploration of the Colca Canyon in Peru has just passed, and the southern trench is widely recognized as the world's deepest canyon. But its upper reaches have always remained shrouded in mystery ... until now. On Aug. 31, eight adventurers, led by Explorer's Club member Yurek Majcherczyk, emerged from the

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region's 12-mile-long Cruz del Condor section tired and beaten after the upper portion's first canyoneering/kayak descent.

With rumors of Incan gold hidden in the canyons (its name means "gold" in one dialect and "money" in another), and locals pointing us to everything from an Incan fortress at the canyon's rim to tombs harboring pre-Incan mummies, it had everything even Indiana Jones could hope for, including a rival expedition team from the Polish club AKT Watra, which put in two days earlier in an effort to beat us to the expedition plum.

In the end, the canyon proved too difficult for either team to complete in the time allotted—facing an average gradient of nearly 270 feet per mile, more than three times that of the Grand Canyon, each team was only able to make about one mile per day downstream. Still, our team's two Alpaca pack rafts as well as a whitewater kayak enabled us to travel somewhat faster than the AKT Watra team, and we passed them on day five. From then on we worked as one to negotiate the rest of the canyon until both parties set up ropes to climb and hike out on day six.

Using pack rafts, climbing ropes, swimming and canyoneering techniques, wet suits and the lone kayak, the team descended more than 1,200 vertical feet of the Class V-VI canyon, with estimates placing the second half dropping another 1,600 vertical feet, making it even more treacherous to traverse.

Carrying along the Explorers Club flag on the expedition, it was as much a scientific journey as an adrenaline-addled one. "We took measurements, geologic samples and mapped it using GPS coordinates for the first time ever," says Majcherczyk, a member of the lower river's 62-mile-long first descent in 1981. "But after six days, we'd only made it half-way, with the steepest portion of the gorge still to come."

The expedition – sponsored by the Warsaw Stock Exchange – was deemed a complete success and brought to light a corner of the world never before seen. "It's become the second most popular tourist attraction in Peru, only behind Machu Picchu," says Majcherczyk. "This should help it get on the map even more."

After the two-day hike out of the canyon, the team arrived in the town of Cabanaconde to a parade in their honor, followed by press conferences in Arequipa and Lima, the latter resulting in front-page stories in the *El Comercio* and *La Republica*, Peru's equivalent of the *Los Angeles* and *New York Times*.

Among the expedition's discoveries was a tomb pointed out by locals containing up to eight pre-Incan mummies. "That alone is a very significant discovery," says Majcherczyk. "All in all, it was an extremely successful expedition."

Eugene Buchanan is the 14-year publisher and editor-in-chief of Paddler magazine and founder of Paddling Life (www.paddlinglife.net).

The former ski patrol, kayak instructor and raft guide also enjoys a successful freelance career, with articles published in various outdoor magazines and other publications. His first book, Brothers on the Bashkaus, was released by Fulcrum Publishing in 2007. He lives with his wife, Denise, and two daughters, Brooke, 8, and Casey, 5, in Steamboat Springs, Colo., just a block away from the Yampa River. ▲



MEDIA MATTERS

Polar Reporter Celebrates 40th – One of the early champions of Will Steger's polar expeditions was Jason Davis of KSTP-TV in Minneapolis/Saint Paul. This Australian television news star with the British accent produced thousands of stories about ordinary Minnesotans doing extraordinary things. This month he is celebrating his 40th anniversary with a special presentation of his *5 Eyewitness News On the Road with Jason Davis* program. Airdates are Nov. 9 and 23. Davis would often chase down Will Steger, flying to the explorer's Arctic training camps in Hubbard Broadcasting's private prop-driven plane. In 1989, during coverage of Paul Schurke's Bering Bridge Expedition, his crew was the first to ever broadcast live television signals from the International Dateline. The *On the Road* 40th anniversary TV special can be viewed at www.kstp.com/otr starting at 11:05 p.m. CT on Nov. 9.

NatGeo Gears Up for Expedition Week – National Geographic Channel will take a page from the Discovery Channel playbook, creating an annual programming event it's calling "Expedition Week." The programming block will debut Nov. 16, and will have nightly premieres including *Unlocking the Great Pyramids*; *Live from the Moon*; *Shipwreck! Captain Kidd*; *the Real George Washington*; *Explorer: Lost City of the Amazon*; *Egypt Unwrapped*; *Dino Autopsy* and a bonus premiere with *Herod's Lost Tomb*.

The specials will feature such personalities as former astronaut Buzz Aldrin. He, along with other panelists from the specials, was asked by television critics meeting in Beverly Hills last summer to describe their most exhilarating discoveries. Aldrin nearly silenced the room as he described his nights in space on the way to the moon, when he observed flashes, lights he could see even with his eyes closed. His Apollo team briefed subsequent astronauts on the phenomenon and eventually the flashes were identified as a type of particle that actually penetrates space capsules and its human contents.

Pete Takeda Goes Hollywood – Producers Steve Schwartz, Paula Mae Schwartz and Nick Wechsler have acquired the Pete Takeda book *An Eye at the Top of the World* and will mine the nonfiction book for a fictional drama. Ryne Douglas Pearson has been set to write the script. It is expected to premiere by 2011.

An Eye at the Top of the World chronicles a CIA mission that sent elite American and Indian climbers to the top of the Himalayan peaks in India to monitor nuclear missile testing in China in 1965. The Boulder-based author will supervise the climbing scenes; he's a seasoned high-altitude climber who devoted part of the book to his attempts to recover the plutonium-powered spy device lost on the mission.

"Writing is just like climbing," Takeda tells *Rocky Mountain Sports* last spring. "If you burn for it, you'll do it. If you entertain a notion of doing it for any other reason, chances are it will be very disappointing." (For more information: www.petetakeda.com).

Strike a Pose – The November issue of *Men's Vogue* takes a peak at adventurer Jon Bowermaster's farmhouse 100 miles north of New York that he shares with his girlfriend Fiona Stewart. Bowermaster, 54, recently returned from three months of kayaking, climbing, hiking, and sailing in Antarctica, the culmination of Oceans 8, a 10-year odyssey. "The beauty of kayaks is that they're like ambassadors," he tells Corey Seymour. "Only once has somebody said something like, 'What are you doing here?'" People generally assume that if you're pulling in on a kayak, you're cool." Our favorite house decoration? His good-luck rubber crocodile. ▲

EXPEDITION MARKETING

Cool Endorsement

Invista has signed pro backpacker Andrew Skurka as brand ambassador for CoolMax fabric. Skurka, known for being the first to complete the 6,875-mi. Great Western Loop and the 7,778-mi. Sea-to-Sea Route, will wear test the wicking material often used in base layer apparel. Skurka, 27, was named the 2007 Adventurer of the Year by *National Geographic Adventure*.

Have a Seat

Sometimes sponsorship support for an expedition comes from the least likely places. That's the case with a recent announcement by explorer Doug Stoup that he was being sponsored by a chair company, in this case Crazy Creek, based in Red Lodge, Mont.

"The Crazy Creek Original is a must on all of my expeditions," said Stoup. "I use it in the tent and in the vestibule while cooking all of my meals – it works great as extra insulation in minus 40 degree temperatures. I've even personalized it with my ICE AXE logo, and it's been a favorite among the clients."

Over the past 10 years, Stoup has completed 17 Antarctic and seven North Pole expeditions in the name of education, the environment, and philanthropy.

Through his ICE AXE Expeditions, the Truckee, Calif.-based explorer has guided a multitude of clients across the frozen Arctic Ocean and Antarctica, raising millions of dollars and creating awareness for important charities and assisting in researching scientific data on global warming.

In 2005, Stoup partnered with several polar friends for one of his proudest expeditions, Pole Track. Together, the team developed weather beacons to track ice movement, temperature and barometric pressure on the Arctic Ocean. Now used by the International Arctic Buoy Program, the beacons provide significant climate change data to scientists. (For more information: www.iceaxe.tv).

In other folding camp chair news, TravelChair, based in Gig Harbor, Wash., has breathlessly announced the launch of their Viva El Grande Chair for the hefty adventurer. The Antarctic El Grande, available in March 2009, is a plus-size version of a chair that was custom-designed for an Antarctic research station. They call it the "hardest working chair" in the TravelChair line, which strikes us as somewhat of an oxymoron, kind of like "jumbo shrimp." Built with non-rusting stainless steel tubing and rivets and sporting heavy-duty ballistic nylon mesh, the 9 lbs. El Grande also has a built-in cup holder (why are we not surprised?). It is rated to handle a meaty 400 lbs. and will retail for \$118. (For more information: www.travelchair.com). ▲

ON THE HORIZON

Sea Stories at **The Explorers Club** – On Nov. 15, The Explorers Club will host its fourth annual Sea Stories, a day focused on exploration, scuba diving, and marine life at its headquarters in Manhattan. Presenters will include: **Anne L. Doubilet**, underwater explorer, writer and photographer; **Kristin Romey**, New York-based writer and explorer; **Guillermo De Anda**, active cave underwater archaeologist and cave explorer; **Jonathan Bird**, a nature photographer who will share his experiences with the wild Atlantic Spotted dolphins of Bahamas; **Dr. Jonathan Leader**, who will discuss the history and recovery of the Confederate submarine *H.L. Hunley*; **Dr. Molly Lutcavage** who has spent 15 years tracking giant Atlantic bluefin tuna from spotter planes, commercial fishing boats, and with pop-up satellite tags; and **Pierette Simpson** who will speak about what it was like on board the Italian luxury liner *Andrea Doria* in 1956 when it was rammed by a Swedish liner, *Stockholm*. Admission is \$55. (For more information: seanholland@aol.com, or The Explorers Club, 212 628 8383). ▲

WEB WATCH

50 States Highpoint Climb Reaches Schoolchildren on the Web – Can an interactive online challenge encourage kids to turn off their computers and enjoy the outdoors? That's the goal of The Coleman Company, Inc. and Denver science teacher Mike Haugen who this past summer broke the record for summiting the highest point in every state. Haugen, 31, blogged and at times slogged his way from the highest peak in the U.S., Mount McKinley (20,320 ft.) in Alaska, to the country's lowest highpoint, Florida's Britton Hill (345 ft.), in a record 45 days 19 hours. The previous record was 50 days 7 hours set in 2005.

Now kids can take an online challenge that picks up where Haugen left off. To advance from one virtual state to the next, kids must first complete an outdoor activity for 60 minutes or walk 10,000 steps (as measured by a pedometer). To play the game, kids can ride a bike, hike through a park, jog, go camping, or participate in dozens of other outdoor activities suggested on the site. That is the purpose of the challenge – get kids outdoors and active.

The educational Coleman 50 Days in 50 States Challenge, which was designed by PE Central of Blacksburg, Va., is accepting registrations at Coleman.com/50states. Students can start logging activity immediately. Teachers in elementary through middle school grades are encouraged to include the challenge in their curricula so that entire classrooms can participate together as a team. Registration ends Nov. 10 and the online challenge continues through Dec. 31. Participation is open to schoolchildren as well as individuals.

Mars Panoramas – The moon is old hat. Been there, done that. But Mars, now that's something else again. We can never tire of looking at the Red Planet. Our favorite Martian images, interactive 360 degree virtual panoramas no less, can be found at www.panoramas.dk/mars/. ▲▲

EXPEDITION CLASSIFIEDS

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 Fontenot at lfontenot@costadelmar.com for information. Learn more about our commitment to exploration and adventure travel at: <http://www.costadelmar.com/adventures/>

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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)

Insulated Support for Cold Weather Athletes – CW-X Conditioning Wear 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 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. Studies show that when wearing CW-X tights there is 26 percent and 36 percent lower oxygen usage compared to regular Tights and Shorts respectively. New for fall/winter 2008-09: the Insulator line of insulated support Tights and Tops. (www.cw-x.com). ▲▲

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