

The Antarctic Sun



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Pax relax



Photo by Tom Cohenour/Special to The Antarctic Sun

Passengers headed to McMurdo Station, Antarctica on one of the first flights of the season enjoy the comforts of a C-17 jet, which is replacing the smaller C-141s in the next couple years. The new C-17s are faster, more comfortable, and have more room for cargo and passengers (also called Pax on flight manifests). National Science Foundation representative Al Sutherland credits the Air Force and U.S. Antarctic Program logistics teams for making it possible for a C-17 and a C-141 to fly down daily as needed to make up for flights lost because of poor weather.

Back on the sunny side of the world

The sounds of homecoming filled the hallways outside *The Antarctic Sun* office this week with laughter and the thuds of bags dropping as people hugged. Next Sunday the *Sun* also will return.

For a famously cold continent, Antarctica is a very warm place. Perhaps the ice insulates, as it does for some of the Antarctic lakes. More likely, the warmth comes from the people, the incredibly intelligent, creative and caring men and women who are drawn to the continent. *The Antarctic Sun* strives to reflect that community, scattered as it is across the Ice, and to be a link between the many camps and stations.

Like each person in this community, the *Sun* plays many roles. We are a com-

munity paper, a popular science magazine and a window into the U.S. Antarctic Program for the rest of the world.

We can fulfill those roles only with your help. We wish to thank you in advance for answering our questions, letting us take your photos and tipping us off to interesting stories.

If you would like to write something for the *Sun*, offer photos or volunteer, please e-mail the *Sun* at antsun@usap.gov. In McMurdo, you can call ext. 2407 or visit the office in Building 155, room 133. Or just stop any of the three editors in the hallways or wherever you see them.

Photos, poems, fiction stories and essays also can be entered in our annual photography and writing contest. The

deadline is Dec. 14. Look for details in future issues.

We know our readers range from astrophysicists to schoolchildren, from the parents of first timers to seasoned veterans of the Antarctic.

Many of our readers find us only online, at www.polar.org/antsun. Even those who get the *Sun* "hot off the copier" might want to visit the Web site to see photos in full color.

Some remote field camps get their weekly news delivered by air, with shipments of much needed cargo. Wherever you are, if you stop getting the *Sun* on a regular basis, let us know.

We'll do what we can to add our little bit of sunshine and warmth to this season.

Next week

Big berg break-up

Long commute to the Ice

Winter science

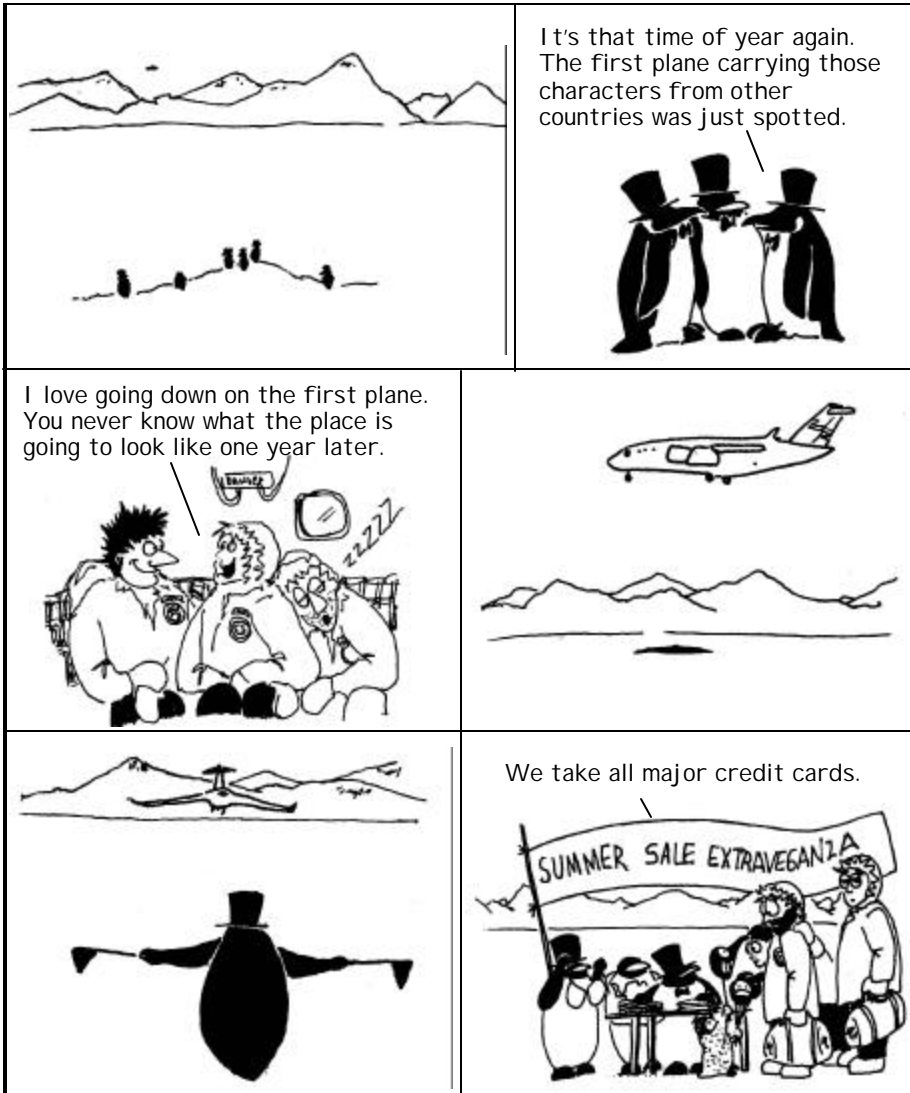
Quote of the Week

"Do these pants make my butt look big?"

- C-17 loadmaster trying on extreme cold weather clothing

Ross Island Chronicles

By Chico



It's that time of year again. The first plane carrying those characters from other countries was just spotted.

I love going down on the first plane. You never know what the place is going to look like one year later.

We take all major credit cards.

Celebrating a new Antarctic season

Before the summer flights to McMurdo even take off, there is cause to celebrate.

The annual official season opening ceremony in Christchurch provides an opportunity for the U.S. Antarctic Program to formally recognize its vital relationship with the Christchurch community, according to Art Brown, the National Science Foundation representative in New Zealand.

"Christchurch is the gateway to Antarctica, traditionally," Brown said. "The opening ceremony is a chance to

reach out to the community, to say thank you, and to socialize."

The U.S. Antarctic program puts \$22 million to \$24 million into the Christchurch economy each year.

The 2003-2004 season was officially opened in Christchurch on September 27 when 184 people attended a buffet dinner in the Christchurch town hall.

The next day, a traditional ceremony was held at the Christchurch Cathedral to transfer the Antarctic chalice back to the Ice. The chalice dates back to 1836, when it was used on the Ross expedition.

Meet the press



Kristan Hutchison is back to lead the journalism team for a third season. "Stan" came to Antarctica from more than a decade reporting for weekly and daily newspapers in Juneau, Alaska, where she left her husband, and around Bainbridge Island, Washington, where

she left her cat. During her recent off-season, she visited 15 countries, including Tasmania, Thailand, Nepal, Poland and Norway. She has a bachelor's degree in political science from Bard College, New York.

Read more about her at www.icepeople.net.

Brien Barnett is a former workaholic now seeking recovery in world travel and work abroad, starting on the Ice. Previously, Brien spent seven years as reporter, photographer, copy editor and most recently, online editor at newspapers in



Idaho, Oregon and California. He left his stuff in storage in Boise, Idaho, including his bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Montana - Missoula.

For more visit www.brienbarnett.com.



Kris Kuenning and her Australian husband went to New Zealand to do a ski season six years ago and never left. Kris has been wavering between writer, photographer, editor, designer (and ski bum) for the past 10 years.

She has a bachelor's degree in journalism from Miami University, Oxford, Ohio.

More soon at www.font.co.nz.

the week in weather

McMurdo Station

High: 21F / -6C Low: -9F / -23C
Wind: 40 mph / 64 kph
Windchill: -60F / -51C

Palmer Station

High: 40F / 4C Low: 23F / -5C
Wind: 45 mph / 73 kph
Windchill: 12F / -11C

South Pole Station

High: -50F / -45C Low: -74F / -59C
Wind: 24mph / 38.6kph