

The Antarctic Sun

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Snow blowing

McMurdo Station's demolitions team sets off charges late last month to dislodge snow and ice overhanging the road to Williams Field. It took three days of blasting to bring the cornice down. Photo by Douglas Cohn.

70 years later, Byrd's memory still flying

By Josh Landis
The Antarctic Sun

Antarctic milestones are fresh in the minds of today's polar inhabitants. On Monday, 70 years to the day after Richard E. Byrd made the first flight over the South Pole, an Air Guard unit commemorated the journey.

The mission, piloted by Maj. Paul Sheppard of the 109th Airlift Wing of the New York Air National Guard, departed from McMurdo and included a fly-by over the pole. When the plane landed, it delivered fuel and other supplies to Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station, where everything arrives by air.

"We're proud to be making ourselves part of South Pole history, ending the millennium remembering those who went before," Sheppard said during the flight.

Byrd and his crew became the first people to fly over the pole on November 29, 1929. The pilot was Richard Balchen, and the co-pilot and radio operator was Harold Gurnee. Byrd served as navigator and Ashley

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Seventy years to the day after Adm. Byrd's landmark flight, Skier 96 makes a low-altitude pass over the South Pole. Photo by Dennis Haunschild.

Y2K: Is Antarctica ready?

By Jeff Inglis
The Antarctic Sun

A thousand years ago, some Europeans feared the world would end with the first millennium. Now, at the close of this millennium, concern has spread to all levels of societies around the world. Some people say the end is near. Others seem less alarmed but forewarn of gas, cash and other shortages as people hoard supplies they fear will become unavailable.

In Antarctica, and in our support structure back in the U.S., there is relative calm. While it's likely that there will be problems in some areas of the world where technology lags, the U.S. Antarctic Program has spent over a million dollars since 1997 to ensure that the remote, resource-limited stations in Antarctica will not have problems.

"Basically anything that plugs in or has a battery backup was assessed in some way," said Beth Bradley, ASA's Year 2000 project manager.

While many people are concerned about computers, Bradley said, they are not the primary concern with the Antarctic program.

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McKinley came along to photograph the event.

In his quest to make history Byrd put together the privately funded mission, which also included a large scientific component. The expedition included three planes, more than 50 men



Adm. Richard Byrd, 1888-1957. Photo courtesy of Byrd Polar Research Center.

and nearly 100 dogs. On Christmas Day, 1928, the men arrived by ship at the Ross Ice Shelf, opposite Ross Island.

They set up camp near the Bay of Whales, and named their settlement "Little America." The summer ended before Byrd would attempt to reach the pole, so he and his party dug in for the winter. The planes went into large pits, and all of Little America was covered with snow.

When the light returned, Byrd and his crew set the final stage for their flight. They established a fuel dump at the base of the Axel Heiberg Glacier in the Queen Maud Mountains. On the 440-mile trip back to Little America they ran out of fuel. They made an emergency landing and waited three days for another plane to arrive with more.

Then, on November 28, 1929—Thanksgiving Day—Byrd's flight began.

The plane, named the Floyd Bennett, took off at 3:29 p.m. and headed south. The crew had planned to follow the Axel Heiberg Glacier up to the plateau. But on their way they spotted the Liv Glacier and decided to ascend there instead. At 8,000 feet, the Ford tri-motor was near the limits of its altitude,

and it still wasn't high enough to clear the glacier.

The Floyd Bennett had to lose weight, and it had to be fuel or survival food. To jettison fuel would jeopardize the mission. Instead, Byrd chose to drop 300 pounds of food. Lightened, the aircraft lifted and crossed onto the plateau.

Navigating that close to the magnetic pole, compasses are ineffective. To determine he'd made it to 90 degrees south, Byrd used a sextant, which makes use of the time and the position of the sun.

At 1:14 a.m. on November 29, Byrd announced he had reached the South Pole. He dropped an American flag to mark his feat, made several passes to account for any navigational errors, and headed for home.

The Floyd Bennett stopped briefly for fuel at the depot on Axel Heiberg Glacier and then landed at Little America just after 10 a.m. The flight had taken about 16 hours.

The same trip took Amundsen three months, and had taken the lives of Robert Scott and his party.

Monday's flight had none of the drama of Byrd's pioneering trip, but the crew of Skier 96 said the memory of his

accomplishment is still inspiring.

"We're all a part of something pretty special down here," remarked co-pilot Maj. Craig Roebuck. "Everyone's a part of history. Seventy years from now people are going to want to know what we did at McMurdo, whether you're a fuelie or a pilot."

The destination of the two flights was the same, but their circumstances were very different. In 1929, Byrd's Ford tri-motor had a cruising speed of 90 miles per hour and a ceiling between 8,000 and 9,000 feet in the thin polar air. The Hercules LC-130 cargo plane that made the trip on Monday was equipped with four turbo-props, climbed above 26,000 feet and cruised at more than 300 miles per hour.

In addition, as navigator, Byrd used measurements taken from the sun to determine his position. The Guard's state-of-the-art navigational system uses computers, satellite receivers, radar and a gyroscope for precise navigation.

The contrast is not lost on anyone who has flown in Antarctica.

"He was on the very edge of flying," said Roebuck. "Most of the land he flew over was unknown, uncharted and unmapped." ✨



Skier 96, the U.S. LC-130 that flew on the historic anniversary Monday, casts a shadow on the polar plateau less than a mile from South Pole Station. Photo by Josh Landis.

Letters to the editors

Open mic, shut mouths

I was in the Coffee House last Saturday enjoying the artists performing at open-mic night. There are some incredibly talented people in MacTown; Saturday night was no exception. Just ask those who were there when this young lady took the stage, did a very short number and had the crowd with mouths agape in wonder. It was as if the crowd was vocally blasted to attention.

All went well until some folks decided they needed to carry on a conversation during later performances, ruining not only my appreciation for the aforementioned talent, but also causing others to fidget about to determine where all the disruptive noise was coming from.

I feel all this gabbing is extraordinarily rude behavior and shows an incredible amount of disregard for those trying to entertain the crowd.

So I have an open message for the community at large: If you have something you feel you need to talk about, can you please take it to the bar area so as not to disturb those of us who actually want to listen to music and not a bunch of chattering? Of course, I am not referring to the occasional phrase we whisper to a friend or associate, as that would be asking too much. But if it's over a sentence or two, take it outside, please.

I can't deign to assume I speak for the whole community but I am certain I'm not the only one whose evening was less than memorable for this having occurred.

—Vilmar Tavares

Kudos for computer response

A few weeks ago I wrote a letter to the editors commenting (unfavorably) on the state of the computers that were available for public use. Sometime following that, an all-hands e-mail went out addressing that concern. As gratifying as it was to receive a response, the content of the e-mail indicated that nothing was going to be done about the problem.

Imagine my surprise and delight when I passed by the computer training room Thanksgiving weekend to find it open for public use!

I and many other people were in a state of disbelief. This stands as a wonderful example of how a great boost in community morale can be accomplished by a simple, small gesture by the powers that be. And all they had to do was listen.

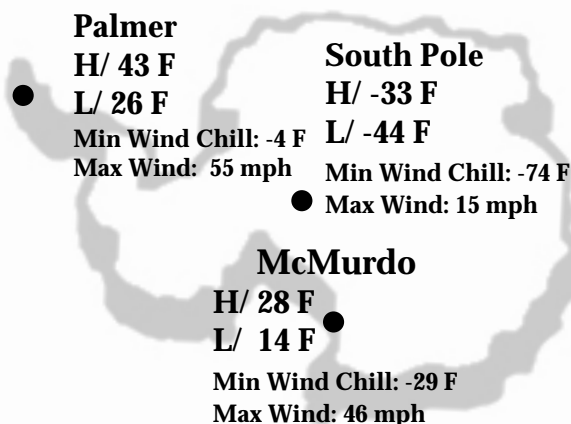
My thanks to the people that made this happen.

—Ralph Horak

Medical is now offering nutrition consultations. This could include anyone who needs to lower their cholesterol to PQ for winter, can't seem to keep from gaining weight on the food here, is struggling with eating issues or just wants to learn how to eat more healthfully. Consultations are by appointment during regular medical hours. Appointments can be made by calling x2251 or e-mailing Meg at davisma@mcmurdo.gov.

Meg Davis has been a nutritionist in private practice for 10 years. She has a B.S. in nutrition from Cornell University and a master's degree in nutrition from Vermont College.

The week in weather



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“And I tell you, if you have the desire for knowledge and the power to give it physical expression, go out and explore. ... Some will tell you that you are mad, and nearly all will say, ‘What is the use?’ For we are a nation of shopkeepers, and no shopkeeper will look at research which does not promise him a financial return within a year. And so you will sledge nearly alone, but those with whom you sledge will not be shopkeepers: that is worth a good deal.”

—Apsley Cherry-Garrard, *“The Worst Journey in the World”*

Laurence de la Ferriere departs South Pole Station en route to Dumont d'Urville via Dome C. De la Ferriere was the first woman to ski solo to the pole, during the summer season of 1996-97. Photo by Dennis Haunschild.

“Y2K”—from Page 1

The problem is caused by confusion in pieces of electronics which have internal clocks. If they fail to properly recognize January 1 as the year 2000 and not 1900, problems could arise. In addition, the fact that next year is a leap year compounds the issue.

With power plants, a TV and radio station, medical equipment, and science equipment, as well as the research vessels and the ubiquitous GPS units, Antarctica is a very technology-dependent place.

“We have more than most companies,” Bradley said.

It is perhaps a blessing, then, that some of the equipment in use is so old. Korean War-vintage radios, for example, have no internal clock, and thus aren’t expected to have any problems, Bradley said.

One problem area Bradley didn’t anticipate was the monitoring system on the heat traces, which warm the outdoor utility pipes at McMurdo and the Pole. If it hadn’t been fixed, the monitoring computer would have failed, potentially freezing all of the pipes at both stations.

It’s not just equipment in Antarctica which was scrutinized. Also examined were the resources of organizations with which ASA and NSF work. The Air National Guard, Aviation Technical Services, the U.S. Coast

Guard, vendors and suppliers of equipment, and subcontractors, as well as the New Zealand and Chilean governments, were all checked for potential problems.

“If anyone thinks of anyone who touches our system in any way I’ll call them and talk to them,” Bradley said.

The computer systems have also been thoroughly checked. Some equipment has been replaced, according to McMurdo computer supervisor Scott Ferguson. Some software has been upgraded or replaced as well, Ferguson said.

Protecting network operations is most important, and involves the checking of all computers that arrive at McMurdo.

“Before it gets attached to the network we test it,” Ferguson said.

E-mail and telephone connections are made via satellite link directly with stations in the United States. Ferguson does not anticipate any problems with those connections. E-mail from Christchurch takes a long route through a number of connections on the ground and in space, but Ferguson is confident those connections will remain intact.

Ferguson also noted that there are multiple methods of communication available. If telephones, for example, do not function properly, radio and e-mail connections will still be possible.

Across the board, Bradley said, equipment has been upgraded or replaced. The project has also required a careful inventory of all items in use throughout the program, which was never fully done before.

“It’s really forced us to update and take a closer look at what we have,” Bradley said.

Now the project is in its final testing phase, verifying readiness of all equipment for the new year changeover.

“We continue to test and retest,” Bradley said.

Fifty people will work overnight on New Year’s Eve to monitor equipment and make sure everything goes smoothly.

A team in Denver will be awake early to support the Christchurch offices, Pole and McMurdo. The team will then wait for the new year to turn at Palmer Station and in Chile. Denver’s own new year will come next, and then an hour later Port Hueneme will head into the year 2000. Only then will the Denver team be done for the day.

Bradley is anticipating some small problems, she said, but none with critical equipment. The NSF says it has a high level of confidence the transition to the new year will happen without an interruption to science research or support. ✨

Mac Center, nerve center

By Jeff Inglis
The Antarctic Sun

Attention aircraft over Antarctica: this is where to report. Passengers and crews on U.S. planes and helicopters anywhere on the Ice rely on Mac Center for safety and information.

When things are going well at McMurdo Station, Mac Center is hopping. Helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft over much of the Antarctic continent are controlled from a small room in Building 165.

When things are going badly, the search-and-rescue team gathers here, as does the mass-casualty response team.

But most of the time, work at Mac Center is about air traffic control. Three thousand square miles of area, from sea level up tens of thousands of feet, are kept in order at Mac Center. And without radar, the controllers have to keep a mental picture of this huge region in their brains.

There are large areas of Antarctica which don't have air traffic control, but the people in Mac Center have to keep tabs on those areas as well, since many of the planes crossing the continent fly through its area of control somewhere on the flight path.

Flights from Africa to Australia and New Zealand routinely cross Antarctica on great circle routes; Qantas, Australia's airline, offers sightseeing flights over Wilkes Land which sometimes brush the edge of Mac Center's responsibility range.

Juggling radios, telephones, and pencils, the people who work in Mac Center track everything, in their heads and on paper. There are route-checkpoint forms, radio-contact forms and weather updates which shuffle past the control desk.

"You have to do all this for each plane," said air traffic control manager Dave Ferguson, gesturing at a set of papers including a long form with spaces for weather conditions, time, and flight direction, among other data.

It's not self-contained. Telephone calls have to be made to Auckland when planes fly across 60 degrees south latitude, the northern boundary of Mac Center's responsibility area. Pilots and controllers depend on reports from Mac Weather, the field camps and aircraft in the air for flying condition information.

Tapes are rolling the whole time, too. They're used for quality control and for training, as well as providing backup in the event of an emergency, so investigators can try to piece together what happened.

Even when most of the planes are on the ground or out of Mac Center's airspace and things are a bit slow, it is not the time to slack off. Someone might radio in any minute, needing information or help. Mac Center stands by. ✨



Ish Ochoa (foreground) and Pete Wilkerson monitor the progress of an Italian LC-130 from McMurdo to Christchurch. Photo by Jeff Inglis.

COLD HARD FACTS

Compiled by Jeff Inglis

Does the water in the sink, toilet or tub spin down the drain in opposite directions in the Northern and Southern Hemispheres? If so, why?

You probably learned about the Coriolis Effect in high school or college science classes. This effect, caused by the rotation of the Earth, does mean that weather patterns and ocean currents spin counterclockwise in the Northern Hemisphere and clockwise in the Southern Hemisphere.

But this effect is fairly small, and does not make much impact on such small amounts of water as those in a sink or toilet. Amounts of water along the lines of a swimming pool, however, do tend to exhibit the results of the Coriolis Effect, but only when they are drained relatively slowly and when the water is very still prior to draining.

In reality, sinks and toilets drain in either direction in both hemispheres, depending largely on the designs of the basin and direction of flow of the water toward the drain.

What's the coldest temperature recorded in Antarctica? The hottest? The highest wind speed?

Here are those statistics according to the website glacier.rice.edu:

Coldest: -129 F at Vostok on the polar plateau, on July 21, 1983. This is also the world's low-temperature record.

Warmest: 59 F at Vanda Station, Scott Coast, on January 5, 1974.

Convergent katabatic winds flowing from the East Antarctic Ice Sheet make the Cape Denison-Commonwealth Bay region of Adelie Land the windiest spot on Earth. The mean annual wind speed is 50 miles per hour and maximum measured wind velocities exceed almost 200

Station and vessel updates

R/V Laurence M. Gould

By Phil Sacks

The R/V Laurence M. Gould departed Punta Arenas on Saturday, November 20. Aboard are research groups headed by Dr. Craig Smith of University of Hawaii and Dr. David DeMaster from North Carolina State University. Terry Houlihan is aboard representing the third principal investigator, Dr. David Karl, also from the University of Hawaii. The focus of the research is to study benthic-pelagic coupling on the West Antarctic Peninsula Shelf.

Only five hours out of Punta Arenas, while still in the Straits of Magellan, one cylinder in the port engine overheated. The engine was shut down and was the ship forced to return to Punta Arenas for repairs. A little over two days later, the engine was running again and the LMG was underway. The vessel passed close by Palmer Station the day after Thanksgiving and two southbound passengers were transferred to the station via Zodiac.

ASA crew aboard the LMG on this cruise are Phil Sacks, MPC; Marian Moyher, MST; Trent Sanamo and Beth McAndrews, MTs; and Ken Schwartz, ET.

Palmer Station

By Bob Farrell

The waters surrounding Palmer Station have happily remained ice-

free and the science community has been busy on the water whenever the winds have allowed boating operations.

Members of BP-013-O have been busy with their surveys of local bird populations. The Adelie, Chinstrap and Gentoo penguins in the area have begun nesting and it won't be long before the chicks will start hatching.

The BP-028-O field team was able to catch some krill and fish larvae on one of their outings, but they've found few krill in the Palmer area. Scientists from BO-279-O were able to do two balloon launches from the station which returned excellent aerial images of the station and its surroundings. The other groups on station continued taking water samples for analysis and UV experiments.

The Gould is working in the area and stopped near the station on Friday, November 26. Two passengers from the ship were transferred to the station via Zodiac. Our new guests arrived just in time to join the Palmer Station community for a sumptuous Thanksgiving feast.


South Pole Station

By Tracy Sheeley

The South Pole celebrated the Thanksgiving holiday in true style—straight out of the 1970's. The weekend began with a disco extravaganza—costumes and music both fit the theme, and the dancing continued on into the wee hours. In the days preceding the weekend, our galley staff and many volunteers worked long hours preparing the feast, which was savored by all.

Laurence de la Ferriere arrived and departed the Pole on November 23 to embark on her solo ski expedition. She received a warm welcome from the Pole population.

Temperatures have remained unseasonably low this year. On November 30, our temp of -42 F broke the 1983 record of -40.2 F. The December 1 low of -43.6 F broke 1965's record of -38 F—this is the coldest December temperature ever recorded! (Records have been kept continuously since 1957.) While this has provided a challenge to crews, scientists and equipment, the hard work continues. The new DASI telescope will be mounted within the next several days. PICO is drilling its first hole for the deployment of the AMANDA neutrino detector strings.

Construction for the new station continues 24 hours a day. The new garage shop is virtually finished, and inspections begin next week. Crews working on the new power plant arch raised the first section last week, and since then, have added three more. 

Faces on



What's the first thing you'd like to see when you get home?



"My folks and my rabbits."
Sam McQuiston
"Mop Ops"



"Sunny, napping under an orange tree."
Cassandra Graber
environmental engineer



"My wife, my dog and the view of the geese across the field in the pond."
Chris Shepherd
director of science support division



"The stars, a big chunk of climbable granite and candy corn, of course."
Jess Barr
general assistant

The cleanest air on Earth

By Aaron Spitzer
The Antarctic Sun

Facing into a stiff wind sweeping over the South Pole, Don Neff knelt on the grainy snow and opened up a suitcase.

He removed and assembled a 12-foot telescoping rod, which he connected to a tube for collecting gas samples from the polar plateau. For 20 minutes he let the device flush clean, then held his breath and turned on a pump inside the case, drawing air into a collection flask.

"It's the cleanest air on Earth," explained Neff, a researcher at the South Pole's Atmospheric Research Observatory. Even his own exhalation could taint the results of the sample.

Twice each month Neff takes measurements with the device, walking upwind from the station into an open swath of snow called the Clean Air Sector, off-limits to personnel and machines. The prevailing breeze almost always blows from the direction of the sector, having carried the world's purest air across hundreds of miles of untouched ice to the Pole.

Neff, an employee of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, is conducting long-term monitoring of the Earth's atmosphere, searching for signs of atmospheric pollution, global warming, ozone depletion and other forms of climate change.

NOAA also operates observatories in American Samoa, atop Mauna Loa in Hawaii, and on the arctic coast in Barrow, Alaska. "The reason they're remote is to try to get away from as many sources of these gases as possible," Neff said.

And it's at the Pole, thousands of miles from the nearest factory or freeway, where the best results are registered. "The air here is the most representative of the global average," he said.

Given the brief human history at the Pole, climate monitoring there stretches back a long way. During the International Geophysical Year in 1957-58, air samples were taken at the station to measure levels of carbon dioxide in the Antarctic atmosphere.



NOAA researcher Don Neff prepares to take a gas sample in the Pole's Clean Air Sector last month. The sample will be sent back to a laboratory in Colorado for analysis. Photo by Aaron Spitzer.

Today, carbon dioxide is still one of the gasses the researchers watch most closely. As a greenhouse gas, CO₂ is the substance most often implicated in theories of global warming.

Levels of the gas have been on the rise at Pole for 40 years, Neff said. "The continuous increase year after year is very noticeable."

And the levels will likely get worse before they get better. According to Neff, "Antarctica is near the tail end of CO₂. It takes a while to work its way down to the Southern Hemisphere." As carbon dioxide emissions climb at the Earth's mid-latitudes, the increase is not registered at the Pole until years later.

In addition to carbon dioxide, the researchers in the Clean Air Sector measure levels of other gasses: CFCs, methane, nitrous oxide, bromine, methylchloroform, ozone-

"pretty much anything except nitrogen and oxygen," Neff said.

The samples are taken in a variety of ways: from hand-held flasks to gas-chromatograph machines to balloon-borne ozone sondes.

While some of the gas analysis takes place on station, many of the samples are sent to NOAA's Climate Monitoring and Diagnostic Laboratory in Colorado for more rigorous study.

They also record meteorological data, like temperature, wind speed and air pressure.

Back inside the Atmospheric Research Observatory, Neff reflects on the global significance of the climate-monitoring research he does at Pole.

"It's work that I can feel good about," he said. "It's adding to something. That's a large part of the motivation to do it." ✨



Summon your muse

Announcing the Antarctic Sun's Creative Writing Contest

Two categories: **Poetry** (max. length 30 lines) & **Fiction** (max. length 500 words)

Entry deadline: December 18, 5.30 p.m.

Enter via Email to sun_news@mcmurdo.gov, or in our office in McMurdo's Building 155.

Our Antarctic Week

Today

Firehouse Expo—1-4 p.m., Firehouse

Monday

90 Degrees South: Antarctic history movie—
8:30 p.m., Galley

Tuesday

Ballroom dancing—6-8:30 p.m., Gym
Play planning meeting—8 p.m., Galleria room,
Galley

Wednesday

Bingo—8 p.m., Gallagher's. \$5 for 10 games,
prize \$150

Thursday

American Night, Scott Base

Friday

DJ 80s party—8 p.m., Gallagher's

Saturday

Women's soiree—8 p.m., Galley

If you have an item for the weekly calendar, e-mail us at sun_news@mcmurdo.gov, call 2407, or drop by our office in Building 155.

Did You Know.....



Brought to you by the Antarctic Fire Department

- Thirty-nine men and women are firefighters in McMurdo.
- They train and equip the fire brigades at Palmer Station, South Pole Station and Byrd Field Camp.
- They staff the main station in McMurdo as well as a second station at the runway.
- Tasks include fire suppression in buildings and aircraft, ambulance service, vehicle extrication, hazardous materials response, dispatching, building inspections, fire extinguisher training and community first aid & CPR training.
- They drive two attack engines, one water tanker, five vehicles for fighting aircraft fires, two ambulances and two utility vehicles.

The Firehouse Expo is today from 1 to 4 p.m. It will include fire engine rides, demonstrations of equipment, and Firehouse Chili.

Ross Island Chronicles

by Richard Perales

We caught another scientist
for our research studies.



Put him in the holding pen.



Let's see how long he can
hold his breath underwater.



Perspectives

Women weave festival of culture

The story behind the soiree

By Luci Cole Burns
Special to the Sun

Many Antarcticans really don't know what the Women's Soiree is all about unless they have witnessed the previous years' events. It is a showcase of women's talents, from poetry to bluegrass music. All the performers are McMurdo science supporters, from GAs to work-order planners and mechanics to janitors. The female community is creating a bit of culture in this remote working environment. It is guaranteed to help you escape, if only for a couple of hours.

Though the entertainers will all be women, men are more than welcome to attend. Men have been a great support since 1996, when it all began. This year, much of the preparation is being done by male carpenters and painters; the sound and light systems are also being set up by men.

In October 1996 I was asked to be an M.C. (Mistress of Ceremonies) and have been ever since. It was held on the "O"-side of the galley. The room was set up much like a coffee house with candles, low lights, wine, biscotti and tablecloths. It was originally called "Women's Coffeehouse."

In 1997 the name was changed to "Women's Celebration," and a new location capable of holding up to 200 people was sought to handle the anticipated audience.

We stumbled onto the possibility of holding it in the Chalet. Even though the occupancy limit was just over a hundred, we decided to go for the ambience. That year it was called "A Quiet Night in



Sarah Krall plays guitar at the 1997 women's soiree at the Chalet. Photo by Kelly Nevins.

McMurdo."

The donations always went to the recreation department because they needed new equipment and had donated both the wine and their time.

In 1998, the women's show leapt in popularity. No place was suitable to hold the hundreds of people who wanted to attend. It was again held at the Chalet, for lack of a better available space. It became "The Soiree at the Chalet."

Over 200 people were turned away, and we didn't hear the end of it. Due to scheduling challenges, we could only hold the event once. But with so many wanting to attend we decided to go back to the galley, only holding it on the "E" side this time. We hope most will be able to get a seat.

This year we're calling it "The Benefit Soiree." We are donating all of the contributions to the Christchurch

Women's Refuge.

The refuge was the first facility of its kind in New Zealand. Founded in 1973, it gives women and children a safe place to stay while trying to escape domestic violence. From July 1998 to June 1999 the shelter provided safety, support, education and advocacy for 562 women and children.

Along with co-M.C. Nancy Farrell and co-coordinator Mariah Crossland, I hope to see many of you at this entertaining and very worthwhile benefit. With all of the support and encouragement we've received from many of you, this should be a grand success!

The Benefit Soiree is planned for Saturday December 11, at 8 p.m. in the galley. Admission and refreshments are free; donations for the Christchurch Women's Refuge will be accepted.



Check out the Sun websites of the week:

<http://www.newzeal.com/steve/antarctica.htm>

A site with lots of scans of stamps, covers, and other items of philatelic interest.

<http://www.south-pole.com/homepage.html>

A site about philately, from the early beginnings of U.S. Antarctic exploration.

<http://www.antarktis.ch/>

A generalist site about Antarctica, with a strong section on philately.



PROFILE

THE JUICEMAN COMETH...

By Capt. Ed Vaughan
Special to the Sun

"That's the Juiceman," said Lin, the shuttle driver, when asked about the dirty van with all the juice cartons on the dashboard.

"I think he just drinks a lot of juice ... and drives pretty fast," she continued. "Yet he's very friendly and always waves when he drives by." Lin's not the only McMurdo resident to notice the Juiceman's distinctive van, known as "Juice-Bar," and his trademark two-finger wave.

Capt. Karl "Juiceman" Stark makes the recovery and redistribution of leftover juice his business. A veteran LC-130 navigator with the 109th Airlift Wing and Supervisor of Flying (SOF) for the past five weeks, Stark sees his role as twofold.

"As SOF, it is my task to troubleshoot problems for the aircrew and expedite their getting airborne to accomplish the day's mission. Operations seem to run smoother when we're all having fun doing our jobs. Juice is my tool for having fun," Stark said.

Historically, leftover food from the aircrew and passenger lunch bags has been simply discarded in the recycle bins. The "Juiceman" views this process as wasteful. He believes that true recycling involves salvaging any unopened, usable food and making it available to those who want it.

Working with his "acquisition team" (LC-130 loadmasters), Stark collects leftover juices, candy bars and the like. He then distributes his "product" to the maintenance personnel working long shifts at the ice runway.

"We really appreciate the consideration. The extra juice or candy bar can make someone's day," said Master Sgt. Scott King, supervisor of aircraft maintenance.

"He's the big daddy," said 109th Deployment Commander Maj. Dave Koltermann. "The Juiceman takes care of everyone."

But not all crewmembers are completely satisfied with the Juiceman's work. According to seasoned flight engineer Master Sgt. Mike Messineo, "The Juiceman rocks! I just wish he'd start offering cake ... or maybe a biscuit or two."

Responding to his culinary critics, Stark said, "I

basically have to stick with prepackaged foods. Treats like biscuits and cake tend to dry up and lose their flavor in the Antarctic climate."

Another 109th flight engineer, Tech. Sgt. Mark Janey, is very satisfied with the Juiceman's positive impact on morale. He said, "The Juiceman makes the commute from MacTown to the airplane very interesting. We ride on the blue couch, drink a juice, wave at the other vehicles and hold on tight around the corners."

Stark seems to truly enjoy his de facto role as ambassador of fun.



The Juiceman offers his trademark two-fingered wave while delivering his product to propulsion specialist Sr. Airman Gary Kuehner. Photo by Ed Vaughan.

Commenting on his two-finger wave, he said, "I always brief my passengers to offer up a friendly wave to the other vehicles. I've developed a simple system of two-finger waves that varies depending upon the driver of the other vehicle. So far, only a few of the other drivers have deciphered it. Those are the drivers who always smile and return the correct wave."

Subscribing to the theory that fun work makes better work, we could all use a little "juice" in our lives. So next time you see the aircrew's dirty van approaching, look for the empty juice boxes in the window and smile at the Juiceman. Just be sure you return the correct wave. ✨