HOW COLD IS IT AT THE SOUTH POLE?

It’s so cold that icicles quickly form on your eyelashes, even beneath a pair of thick goggles. It’s so cold that the packed snow squeaks as you plod across it. It’s so cold that even though the sun never sets in summer, a temperature reading of minus 30 degrees Fahrenheit is considered balmy. All of these answers are courtesy of Sebastian Stewart ['06], who made the 13,200-mile trek to Antarctica in November. An engineer working at the Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, MD, he spent seven days performing annual maintenance of a scientific instrument.

“When you take your first breath on the ice,” the cold air grabs your throat,” said Stewart, 24. “The high altitude is disorienting, and you can feel your heart pounding. The lowest temperature while I was there was minus 68 degrees.

“As cold as it is, many people don’t realize that it rarely snows at the South Pole—only 2 to 3 inches a year,” he continued. “But the snow and ice layer never melts, so it is packed nearly 2 miles thick.”

Stewart, a 2001 graduate of Wilde Lake High School in Columbia, has worked as an instrument engineer for Science Systems and Applications Inc. since June of last year, after graduating from Salisbury University with a double major in physics and mathematics. His parents, David and Consuelo Stewart of Dorsey Hall, are college math teachers.

His mission at the South Pole was to conduct a “complete physical checkup” on an instrument operating there, said Steve Palm, SSAI research meteorologist.

“Seb, as we call him, works on a project called Micro-Pulse Lidar [MPL], which is a worldwide network of autonomous ground-based systems that gather information on the cloud and aerosol structure of the atmosphere,” he said.

‘RIGHT AT HOME’

“He has been right at home working on the MPL instruments, making sure they are optically aligned and calibrated,” Palm added. “Seb also fixed a problem with the scan angle encoder that tells us the angle at which the MPL is pointing.”

According to a Web site describing the MPL network, the types of observations that are collected by the instruments “are required for several NASA satellite validation programs, are useful for studies of aerosol transport, and are also a high priority of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.”

Stewart said he took off one glove to fine-tune a screw on the instrument, but had to quickly tug it back on within 30 seconds. “It’s hard to put into words what that frigid air feels like on bare skin,” he said. “You can actually feel your skin freezing.”

Arriving at the South Pole involved a weeklong journey encompassing 30 hours of air travel, Stewart said.

His trip was broken into four flights on commercial jets and two trips on a C-17 military aircraft fitted with skis, a plane so large that it carried a helicopter as cargo, he said. His last stop before landing at his destination at the bottom of the world was at nearby Christchurch, New Zealand, where he said he obtained heavy-duty, cold-weather gear lent to him by the National Science Foundation.
'THE SCENERY WAS SURREAL'

"When I finally set foot at the Pole, the scenery was surreal—you almost can’t take it all in," said Stewart, who added that photos of him in his red parka and goggles resemble an astronaut surrounded by the stark landscape of the moon. “I liked to visualize myself standing at the bottom of the Earth and to contemplate the spiritual feeling of the setting. The air is so clear you can look up and see the Milky Way galaxy.”

He said that one of the oddest sights is the sun, which circles just above the horizon instead of rising and setting. In March, at the autumnal equinox there, it finally goes down and stays down for six months of winter darkness.

"It really looks alien as it goes around and around, and watching it makes you feel like you aren’t on Earth," said Stewart.

The constant daylight prohibits a good view of the aurora australis, which is the southern counterpart of the aurora borealis, commonly known as the Northern Lights, he said.

There really is a pole at the South Pole, said Stewart—two in fact. One pole is topped with a 6-inch engraved metal disc that is replaced annually with a disc of a different design that’s been engraved with the current year, he said. The new pole is planted each New Year’s Day at 90 degrees south, the exact location of the geographic South Pole. Since the location moves about 10 meters each year because of shifting of the polar ice sheet, he said, past poles still poke up from the snow like random pickets from a fallen fence.

The ceremonial pole resembles a barbershop’s red-and-white striped post topped by a mirror-like sphere, a nod to the popular vision of how the pole should look, Stewart said. It is encircled with the flags of the countries represented in the Antarctic Treaty, which regulates international relations.

Nearby is the Clean Air Sector, where the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration takes samples of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

“This land is virtually untouched by man and carries across it what has been deemed the cleanest air on the planet," Stewart said.

“I was allowed to walk out once with an employee who had to change a sensor on an instrument, and we scooped up several small vials of untouched snow," he continued. “After the snow melted, we drank it and it tasted so unbelievably good.”

He said he brought home a few cylinders as souvenirs, adding that the vials’ steel caps should allow for little evaporation.

“My company sends someone to check on our instruments at the Pole each year, so I am hoping to get the chance to return," Stewart said. “Who knows? Perhaps I can redesign our instrument, and they’ll have to send me to install the new one.

“Visiting the South Pole is humbling," he said, “and I’d like to experience that feeling again."
In most college classes, students’ biggest concern is whether they pass or fail. For 13 Salisbury University nursing students who attended a January study abroad course in Tanzania, Africa, however, the stakes were a little higher.

They were teaching villagers skills that could mean the difference between life and death.

Through the Global Service Corps program, these students and their professors, Drs. Tina Brown, Vonnie Brown and Karin Johnson, spent the earliest part of 2008 teaching HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention in a country where the prevalence of the disease is 8 percent. At the same time, the students themselves learned lessons—about the challenges faced by those who had already contracted the diseases in one of the world’s five poorest countries.

“You couldn’t teach that in a classroom,” Johnson said. “It wouldn’t be the same. You try to teach students what compassion means, then you put them in a place where they have to feel it.”

This was not the first trip to Tanzania for SU nursing students. However, it was the first trip delayed due to world politics. When political unrest broke out in Kenya just days before the SU group was scheduled to leave on an itinerary which included that country, the trip was delayed while a safer alternate route was planned.

It also will not be the last trip—Johnson is planning another African outreach program in early 2009.

**DESTINATION: COSTA RICA**

**An ‘Alternative’**

While thousands of college students throughout the country headed toward Ft. Lauderdale, Cancun and other popular destinations for spring break, eight Salisbury University students spent their vacation in a foster home.

During the first SU-sponsored international alternative spring break program, students with the Global Program Service Group assisted some 37 foster children in Cartago, Costa Rica. These children were also on a “spring break” of sorts, out of school for Easter week. SU students planned activities and played with the children while also helping clean the home and assisting the youngsters with hygiene from nail clipping to hair cutting.

Students attending included marketing major Margaret Evans, nursing major Megan Markline, environmental issues major Juliana Humphreys, business administration major Rachel McGinley, international studies major Aidan Tacheron, business administration major Kay Johnson, English major Dan Caton and history major Mel Morrissey.

“The experience was enjoyable, amusing, enlightening and heart-wrenching all at the same time,” said Dr. Jill Caviglia-Harris of SU’s Economics and Finance Department, who supervised the trip. “With an open mind, willing heart and the desire to help, these students not only explored the rewarding
Spring Break

nature of volunteer work and humanitarian endeavors, but also ultimately discovered themselves.”

Initiated by the SU Economics Society, the trip was funded through a variety of events including poker tournaments, a 5K run and bingo. Students also performed odd jobs for local community members in exchange for trip funding.

“My experience really shaped my world view—it made me realize how similar people of all walks of life really are and I feel so blessed to have been able to learn as much as I did,” said Humphreys.

For some students, the trip was even more personal.

“One of the little girls colored a picture of a mama elephant and a baby elephant and gave it to me with the words ‘I love you’ written on it,” said Johnson. “That moment melted my heart.”

The program was arranged by Cross-Cultural Solutions (CCS) an international not-for-profit organization founded in 1995 with no political or religious affiliations.

“With the assistance from the Student Government Association, the SU administration and the Center for International Education, we are hoping to develop an annual program,” said Caviglia-Harris.

A Study Abroad First

by Dr. Lucy Morrison, English Department and Bellavance Honors Program

In March, the students of English 399/Honors 311 set off on a Salisbury University first—a spring break embedded experiential learning course titled “London and the Lakes.”

The journey came to fruition as students took off for the United Kingdom on the Friday before spring break that signals relaxation and rejuvenation for most SU students. First traveling from London by train to the Lake District in northwest England, the group spent three days there following in the footsteps of great writers, such as William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Thomas DeQuincey. Whether it was sitting on top of an open double-decker bus with twigs slapping at their hands, or hiking nine miles round the top of a lake to see a castle, students discovered the ways in which history and modernity coexist in the U.K. Moreover, they experienced firsthand the landscapes of Wordsworth’s poetry in ways that simply cannot be encapsulated in a more traditional classroom experience.

Seeing the daffodils littering the slopes of the field Wordsworth bought for his daughter Dora before her untimely death, feeling the newspaper-lined walls of the children’s room above the cool pantry built into the hillside of the great poet’s first Grasmere home, or watching the swans navigate the still peaceful waters of Lake Windermere, students came to a fuller contemplation of early-19th century poetry and its world as it can still be experienced in the natural surroundings that remain in Cumbria.

Back in London for the second half of the week, the Euston station air was almost noticeably heavier than that of open Cumbria. The great museums of the capital took students back to reviewing William Blake’s art (one of his earliest series of paintings, currently exhibited in Tate Britain, was shown together for the first time since Blake’s own day). Or they could attempt experiments revealing the empirical ways in which J.M.W. Turner researched the light he then captured so famously in his works. Given a day upon which to choose one of many other possible assignments, several dedicated students got up at 6 a.m. in order to travel to Wales and see the titular subject of the famous last poem of Lyrical Ballads—even though their late night return made the journey home that much longer.

Experiencing the settings of great literature was only a part of the week. Students tried new and unpronounceable foods, attended an opera for the first time and found that rain is not the only weather option in Britain (there’s hail and snow too—as well as blue skies and glorious sunshine). Students wrote frequently while there and reflected upon the experience in various assignments during the rest of the semester.

As they continued to explore the early-19th century back in the University classroom, they retraced their steps from the country to the city in their continued readings too. And as they read Dickens they were able to see, at least in part, the world which he inhabited and they walked just a few short weeks ago. It wasn’t a ‘break’ really, but there was no better way to spend the time than engaged in such hands-on learning.
School may have been out last summer, but learning continued for three from Salisbury University.

As SU graduate students, Andrea Drewes and Kenneth Johnson ’85 spent part of their summer vacation in Malaysia, visiting schools and conducting research to learn about science education on the other side of the world.

The project was conducted by Dr. Edward Robeck, science education faculty, who was in residence at the American Geological Institute as a Fulbright Scholar. “It was an eye-opening experience where they were able to compare their own teaching to the diversity of teaching in an international setting,” he said. “They examined the role of culture, the organization of schools and the way that science education is conducted.”

From August 2-11, Robeck traveled to some 10 schools in rural and urban Malaysia with the two teachers and Dr. Robert Steiner from New York City’s American Museum of Natural History, who is collaborating on the research.

During the trip, the group assessed the need and readiness for online professional development courses for science teachers in Malaysia, a multicultural and geographically diverse country. Robeck said they explored the infrastructure for such technology, as well as online professional development for science teachers in Malaysia.
A Whole New World: From SU to USAF

by Allison Doucette ’06

As a student at Salisbury University I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to study abroad. I participated in one of Salisbury’s exchange programs which took me to the Technical University of Berlin in Germany. This opened up my life to a whole new world—one that I did not know existed. My year abroad was worthwhile, indescribable and gave me the urge to travel any chance I got.

After returning from my travels I began to work at SU’s Office of International Education. This office quickly transformed into the Center for International Education and grew during my last semesters at Salisbury. As my graduation was quickly approaching, I wanted to continue my education by getting my master’s degree and began to pursue the idea of an International Master of Business Administration (I.M.B.A.). I began looking at schools that were not on the East Coast, were in my price range and had a mandatory study abroad program built into the curriculum. I had chosen three universities that fit my criteria with the closest to Maryland being Portland State University in Oregon.

I discussed my plans with the director of the Center for International Education, Dr. Brian Stiegler, who encouraged me to look into schools where I could receive a Master of International Education. This plan fit my wants much more than an I.M.B.A. because of my love to travel and enthusiasm for education abroad. I changed my search for master’s programs with the same criteria as before and quickly came to a standstill. I never found a school that interested me or a program that I was keen on.

Since my school pursuit became sluggish I began to look into other avenues where I could get my graduate degree without having excess debt and be able to travel. My aunt talked to me about what the Air Force could offer and how great of an experience it was for her. Just to make her and my mother happy I made an appointment with a recruiter in Salisbury. What I was not expecting was that the USAF could offer me most of what I wanted. The Air Force would pay for my master’s degree through the Montgomery GI Bill and allow me to travel among other things. I went back to talk to the recruiter a week later after reading some of the material he gave me and doing a little research on my own and decided that there was no reason why I should not join the Air Force.

My application got started and I began to prepare to join the U.S. Military. My recruiter knew of my proficiency in German and told me about the crypto-linguist job that I could test for. I was extremely excited about this possibility since I have always been interested in languages and I would have the chance to learn an exotic language. I passed the Defense Language Aptitude Battery Test which allowed me to apply for a ground crypto-linguist position. I got the job and left for Basic Military Training at the end of last October.

I am now studying at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center in Monterey, California where this next step of my journey that began at SU ends in May 2009.
**DESTINATION: HOLLYWOOD**

**Krinsky Leads the ‘Herd’ on Chuck**

From FOX’s hit drama *The O.C.* to the NBC comedy *Chuck*, Salisbury University alumnus Scott Krinsky ’90 is earning a name for himself in Hollywood as a character actor on television.

A Los Angeles-based performer (he also does stand up comedy), Krinsky currently plays the role of “Jeff” in *Chuck*. Co-starring in 13 episodes so far, Krinsky’s character works at the Buy More on the “nerd herd” team.

“It takes place at a Best Buy type of store and we’re the equivalent of the Geek Squad,” Krinsky said. “Jeff is the older of the nerds. He’s been there the longest; he will probably be there for life. Prior to *Chuck*, Krinsky played “Darryl,” a vagrant who appeared in five episodes of *The O.C.* He has also appeared in the CBS show *Without a Trace*, *MADtv* and several independent films.

“A lot of the characters that I have played and love to play are these quirky eccentric types,” Krinsky said. “It’s a fun role. There’s a reason actors choose to play certain characters. You can see parts of yourself and you bring certain aspects of yourself to every character.”

In addition to episodic and film roles, Krinsky has appeared in numerous national commercials which include McDonald’s, Mountain Dew and Dish Network. He also regularly performs stand-up comedy at The Comedy Store and Improv in Los Angeles.

A native of Olney, MD, Krinsky studied communication arts and broadcast journalism at SU. “I have such great memories of Salisbury and I’m really proud to say that’s where I went to college,” he said.

Krinsky interned for CNN during winter breaks and after graduation worked as a producer for corporate training and promotional videos. He continued to take acting classes and after about two years decided his heart was in California and pursuing his ultimate dream.

“It was one of those moments where you get to a point and you ask yourself, ‘What do I really want to do with my life?’” he said. “I chose to pack it up and move to Hollywood.”

---

**DESTINATION: JAPAN**

**Singing and Sushi:**

by John Wesley Wright, SU Voice Faculty

This past December I was privileged to return to the land of the Rising Sun to serve as the tenor soloist in concerts sponsored by the Japanese Volunteer Center (JVC). An international organization for community development, peace exchange and emergency relief, JVC hosts two annual fundraising concerts: Handel’s *Messiah* and Bach’s *Christmas Oratorio* held in Osaka and Tokyo, respectively.

It was the fifth time in my career that I have traveled to Japan. As usual, I enjoyed visiting the temples and statues and seeing the ornamental gardens for which the country is famous. It also was a feast for my palate—fine teas, the best steaks, noodle soups, wonderful fish—but no sushi for me.

One would think by now that I would have acquired a taste for sushi. Alas, I have not. What I did acquire on this trip, however, was a great sense of global connectedness. With a commitment to global awareness and outreach, JVC invites different international soloists and conductors yearly to collaborate with a professional Japanese orchestra and local choirs to perform benefit concerts in true global fashion. What a concept! This season
In November 2008 SU launches the Community Global Learning Seminar Series (CGLSS) with a one-week seminar (November 8-16) in London, England. The CGLSS provides exciting international continuing education opportunities for SU friends, alumni and the Delmarva community. Seminars are lead by SU faculty members with an expertise in the destination. The faculty leader provides informal lectures, background reading and insight.

The London Theatre Seminar exposes participants to the cultural richness of one of the great theatre capitals of the world. The program includes two nights at the theatre in London (shows will be announced soon) and two three-day London Travel Cards that include a half-day guided tour of London and a ride on the London Eye. Participants have ample time to explore London on their own with the “tube” pass provided with the London Travel Cards. Participants stay at a three-star, tourist hotel strategically located in central London.

The faculty leader for this London adventure is Gerald Patt, recently retired communication and theatre arts faculty. With an M.F.A. from Southern Illinois University, Patt taught Design and Technical Theatre at SU 1983-2008. He also served as Director of Theatre at Fordham University in New York City.

Total cost of the London Theatre Seminar is estimated at $2,600 for double occupancy (the final price will be determined in the fall). The price includes round trip airfare from BWI airport, hotel, continental breakfasts, two special group dinners, London Travel Cards and theatre tickets. For a modest additional cost, group transportation can be provided for interested participants from SU to BWI.

More information on the CGLSS: London Theatre as well as a registration form are available at www.salisbury.edu/intled/cglss/london/. To learn more contact Patt at gdpatt@salisbury.edu or the Center for International Education at sucie@salisbury.edu or 410-334-3495.