

Elementary teacher gets a taste of the Arctic

Corvallis GT 8-10-03

Far from his second-grade classroom, Corvallis man studies seawater, ice flows

BY THERESA HOGUE
STAFF WRITER

CORVALLIS — When Gerhard Behrens looks outside each morning, he's greeted by a shifting landscape of gray water and the craggy white peaks of icebergs. It is about as far away from his Adams Elementary School classroom as Behrens can get, but right now the world is his classroom.

"The topography is remarkably similar to Death Valley or Northern Arizona," he said. "Lots of rocks and mountains. There just happens to be an ocean of water here."

Behrens, a second-grade teacher at Adams, is on board the U.S. Coast Guard icebreaker Healy, surrounded by a crew of university researchers studying seawater and ice floes in the Arctic.

They are in the Nares Strait, between northern Greenland and Ellesmere Island. He got involved in the project through his friendship with the project's chief scientist, his neighbor, Kelly Falkner.

As a layman, Behrens is responsible for keeping an online journal of the ship's research projects and adventures, as well as posting photographs and working as an assistant on a variety of projects.

"I have a bit of an adventurer streak in me," Behrens wrote from his shipboard computer. The Internet is his only connection to the outside world



To see the mission's

Web site, go to:

newark.cms.udel.edu/~cats/
and click on "2003."

right now.

"I was a Peace Corps volunteer in Mali, and my family was gone for six weeks of camping last summer. That may have qualified me for a month at sea."

Behrens has been an elementary and middle school teacher for 15 years, and he has created science curriculum for the Corvallis schools. He admits to not being keen on oceanography or the Arctic but is enthusiastic about his work aboard ship.

"I have never felt like the science team was made up of strangers," he said. "Teams of folks arrived from lots of different places. Most of us were getting to know each other, a little like freshman year at college."

Behrens' Web logs chronicle a world full of breaking ice, clamshell testing and, most of all, teamwork among scientists.

"No one is getting a thing done on this ship as an individual," he said. "Everyone relies on lots of others. One person can screw it up for everyone, but everyone working together is unbelievably powerful."

Falkner is a chemical oceanographer at Oregon State University. She has worked in the Arctic for more than 10 years, and said having laypeople such as Behrens aboard is extremely worthwhile.

"The activities they are witnessing and contributing to will serve as the basis for incorporating and designing up-to-date and interesting, hands-on, inquiry-based science learning modules in the classroom," she said.

Behrens' role as a Web log contributor is also important.

"With over 75 Coast Guard personnel and 33 in the science-party, their Web journal pages also serve as an excellent way for families on shore to learn about what their loved ones are up to," Falkner said.

Behrens plans to share some of his adventures and photographs with students and use the trip to explain how scientists work, and how the scientific process played out during the many experiments he witnessed on board.

While students at Adams don't focus specifically on the Arctic in their curriculum, he thinks there are plenty of ways he can slip activities

and demonstrations into the existing science courses.

Deciding to spend a month away from his wife and daughters was a difficult decision but Behrens isn't regretting the decision.

"I've learned a lot about oceanography, about doing sci-

ence, and about life in the Coast Guard service. I've also met some interesting, funny, insightful people," he said. "Top that off with scenery that is right out of a National Geographic Magazine. It's a darn good way to spend a month."



Ron Leavitt MSCCC-A
Audiologist, Instructor,
Group Founder

THE BEST DIGITAL HEARING AID?

Get unbiased information on hearing aids from experienced hearing aid users, not from sales people.

For five years our consumer-test group has bestowed our highest ratings to a select group of twin-microphone, multi-channel, fully digital hearing aids. This month our product testers continue their evaluation of a hearing aid that incorporates all of those features in a radically more compact and reliable package. Join us at our monthly meeting and hear what our experienced product testers have to say about this newcomer. The public is invited. Refreshments are served. There is no charge, and no one will try to sell you anything!

Meeting Time: Thursday, August 14th
3:30 to 5 pm

Meeting Place: Corvallis Senior Center
2601 NW Tyler

For more info contact:
Corvallis Hearing & Speech Center
301 SW Fourth St. #180
754-1377

REGAL CINEMAS
A REGAL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP COMPANY
DIG + DIGITAL SOUND BARGAIN SHOWS IN (!)
★ Pass / Discount Ticket Restrictions Apply
Monday-Discount Shows All Day excluding ✓ Films
ADVANCE TICKETS AT FANDANGO.COM & 800-FANDANGO

ALBANY CINEMAS 7 541-928-7469
800-FANDANGO #3094
Next To Fred Meyer

S.W.A.T. (PG-13) DIG ★ ✓	(135 430) 730 1025
FREAKY FRIDAY (PG) DIG ✓	(1145 210 440) 710 935
AMERICAN WEDDING (R) - ID REQ'D DIG ✓	(1225 250 520) 750 1015
LARA CROFT: CRADLE OF LIFE (PG-13) DIG	(200 450) 740 1020
SPY KIDS 3D (PG) DIG	(1255 300 510) 720 930
BAD BOYS 2 (R) - ID REQ'D DIG	(1220 335) 650 1005
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN (PG-13) DIG	(1240 350) 700 1010

9TH ST. CINEMAS 4 541-928-7469
Behind Skippers 9th St. 800-FANDANGO #3128

AMERICAN WEDDING (R) - ID REQ'D DIG ✓	(1220 240 515) 745 1020
SEABISCUIT (PG-13) DIG	(1200 320) 645 950
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN (PG-13) DIG	(1240 345) 700 1005
BEND IT LIKE BECKHAM (PG-13) DIG (1210 245 510); 730	
GIGLI (R) - ID REQ'D DIG ★ ✓	955

Times For 8/10/03 ©2003 www.REGALMOVIES.com