



A. Case for conservation

Antarctica: The frozen success story

By ALENE N. CASE

In October, 1991, agreement was reached on one of the most important documents since the Magna Carta. Why have we not heard about such a momentous event? It may have something to do with the isolation of the land in question. Thirty-nine nations have agreed to continue the Antarctic Treaty with the additional proviso that there be no mining or fossil fuel exploration there during the next fifty years. At the end of fifty years, three-quarters of the signatory nations could vote to reverse that moratorium. Or, perhaps by then, we will have decided on a structure for creating a unique world park.

Antarctica is certainly unique. It contains 90% of the world's fresh water, yet it receives less than two inches of precipitation each year. It is the highest continent on Earth, yet much of it is actually below sea level due to the weight of the huge ice pack. In the Southern Hemisphere summer, only 2-4% of the land is free from ice cover. Only a few flightless insects and other invertebrates and the male Emperor penguins can survive the Antarctic winters. Plants are generally confined to extremely slow-growing lichens, a few mosses, and algae. Yet, the waters off Antarctica are some of the most productive in the world's oceans.

There are several ways in which Antarctica functions as a global air conditioner. The most obvious is that all the snow and ice is extremely reflective. Therefore, much of the sunlight that hits the surface is returned to space without warming the Earth. Of course, during half of the year little solar

energy reaches the surface of Antarctica because it is tilted away from the sun. During this time, pack ice forms on the surface of the Southern Ocean. Satellites have shown that there are fairly large holes in this ice cover. These holes, called polynyas (pronounced pa-lin'ya), act as heat pumps which release heat to the atmosphere from the ocean water beneath.

Furthermore, the complex movement of currents around Antarctica leads to heat loss and the northward movement of cold water along the bottom of the world's oceans. These currents also contribute to the high productivity of the off-shore areas by bringing a continuous supply of nutrients to the surface. The main factor limiting the growth of marine organisms is light, not nutrients as in most of the rest of the oceans. As much as 30% of the carbon dioxide that we release into the atmosphere is taken up by the tiny plants that live in the Southern Ocean. That carbon dioxide is, therefore, not available to trap solar radiation and contribute to the "greenhouse effect."

In 1959, soon after the completion of the International Geophysical Year, twelve nations signed the Antarctic Treaty. That treaty begins by stating that "It is in the interest of all mankind that Antarctica shall continue forever to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and shall not become the scene or object of international discord." It bans all nuclear explosions or other preparations for war. It provides for scientific investigations and the free exchange of data among the treaty members. Over the years, additional agreements have provided

for conservation of plant and animal life and for the conduct of fisheries in the Southern Ocean.

Almost every scientific article or book that I have read about this frozen continent concludes with a plea for the continuation of the cooperation that has characterized recent work in Antarctica. T.O. Jones of the National Science Foundation wrote the following in 1965: "And as you think about our work you hope that this first of the great intensive environmental investigations of our time will continue on a wise and peaceful course...The far-reaching possibilities of this unique international effort may be just as important to us as a political experiment as it is as a scientific program."

At the end of his first voyage to the Antarctic in 1972-73, Jacques Cousteau wrote "Here is a blend of harmony and purity; the waters teem with life; the air is clean and fresh...It is the last continent to be explored; may it be the first continent not to be plundered." Robert Swan in his epilogue to *A Walk To The Pole* sums it up this way: For me also, Antarctica today is unique in one overriding respect: no one owns it. Every other continent on this earth has seen wars and, more recently urban pollution, testimony to the greed that almost overwhelms human history. It is up to us to ensure that Antarctica, the last of the virgin continents, is the exception in this saddening catalogue of human destruction.

Thanks to public support from all over the world symbolized by the two million petition signatures collected by The Cousteau Society, we are very close to seeing these dreams become reality.

Only yesterday

60 Years Ago - Aug. 11, 1933
MEN LOST IN WOODS
36 HOURS ARE FOUND

A benefit garden party will be held at Mrs. Burr Miller's garden at Ridgewood Farm, Hillside, Friday, Aug. 18 from 3-5:30 p.m. to enable Wyoming Historical Society to continue to function along its established lines as a vital cultural factor in the community.

Completely lost in dense woods not far from Noxen, 18 men who had come from Wyoming Valley to pick huckleberries hiked for 36 hours through the mountains until they reached a cabin on Mehoopany Creek where they were given correct bearings. The men went by truck to Noxen about a week ago, leaving the truck at Baker's Farm, moved on in search of berries, and were unable to retrace its steps to the spot where the truck had been left.

You could get - Potatoes full 15-lb. peck 45¢; P&G Soap, 6 cakes, 19¢; Waldorf toilet paper, 6 rolls 25¢.

50 Years Ago - Aug. 6, 1943
RECORD-PRODUCING WELL IS DRILLED

Word has been received that Lt. Fred Westerman, Royal Canadian Air Force, son of Mrs. Mary Westerman, formerly of Trucksville has been missing in air combat over Germany since April 20.

Three Wyoming County barns were burned to the ground last week when they were struck by lightning during seven electrical storms. The properties, all in widely separate parts of the county were owned by Burns O. Sheldon, Laceyville; Donald Williams, N. Eaton and Herbert Place, Mehoopany.

Producing 750 gallons of water

an hour, the largest flowing well ever drilled by R.R. Shaver & Son, came in last week on the property of Charles Hilbert at Beaumont. Shaver who has drilled wells for the past 35 years, said the well was one of the finest he had ever seen and the largest flowing well he had ever drilled.

40 Years Ago - Aug. 7, 1953
SATURDAY MAIL DELIVERY TO START IN AREA

August 7 has been set as the date when city delivery of mail will start in the area served by the Dallas Post Office. Postmaster Joseph Polackey announced that he has received instructions from N.R. Abrams, Asst. Postmaster General to submit the names of eligible candidates to the Civil Service Board so that two temporary carriers can be selected by that date.

Four new teachers, Helen Sliker, Ashley, Marjorie E. Wagner, Kingston and Mrs. Loretta K. Cheneck, Kingston were appointed by the Dallas-Franklin joint school board at Tuesday night's meeting. William D. James, Vernon was appointed on a substitute basis to serve one term, until Alfred M. Camp returns from a sabbatical leave.

Now playing, "Desert Storm" with Gordon MacRae and Kathryn Grayson at Himmler Theatre.

30 Years Ago - Aug. 8, 1963
AREA MAN LEAVES TO TEACH IN AFRICA

Frederick Malkemes, son of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Malkemes, Shaver-town will leave Idlewild Airport Sunday to spend two years in Africa. The local teacher will instruct history and English classes at the high school in Kenya.

An outdoor concert will be

presented by the summer band at Dallas Junior High School athletic field Tuesday night. This program is sponsored by the Dallas School District under the supervision of Lester R. Lewis.

Applications for an examination for the position of Substitute Clerk Carrier may be secured at the Dallas Post Office. Applicants must reside within the delivery area of the Dallas Post Office. The salary rate for this position is \$2.26 to \$3.14 an hour.

20 Years Ago - Aug. 9, 1973
FERN BROOK SITE OK'D FOR ENCON PLANT

Dallas Area School District's temporary building on Hildebrandt Road has neared completion and will be ready for intermediate school students when school opens September 5. The \$1.4 million complex was federally-funded to help ease the crowded conditions caused by the influx of students of Wyoming Valley following the 1972 flood.

Dallas Township Board of Supervisors approved the rezoning of 57 acres located in Fernbrook, Demunds Rd. A-1 to M-2 so that construction could begin on a one half million dollar industrial plant. Energy Converters, Inc. will be located at the northern end of the property and will manufacture fabricated electrical heating sources for electrical heating and air conditioning industrial suppliers to other manufacturers.

College Misericordia's Theatre 3 organization capped another successful benefactor campaign last Wednesday as campaign volunteers reported 414 benefactors registered for the 1973-74 Theatre 3 season. The campaign goal had been set at 400 benefactors. The 1973-74 program will begin October 1 with Peter Nero.

Fire hazard

(continued from page 1)

blizzard and April's heavy rains and flooding have helped to offset many problems.

"As of last week, most area reservoirs were between 74 and 95 percent of capacity but dropping very quickly," he said.

April's five-inch surplus of rain has been the year's only saving grace, Solano said, because soil moisture in the top six inches of dirt is now only half of what it should be for this time of year.

Both Solano and Besecker agree that three or four inches of steady, gentle rain would go a long way.

If the National Weather Service is right, some relief may be in sight.

Solano said that the long-range forecast for the next three months predicts near normal temperatures and rainfall, or approximately three inches of rain each month.

Water co. urges restraint

The prolonged dry spell has prompted General Waterworks, supplier of water to portions of four area municipalities, to ask its customers to voluntarily cut back on watering their lawns.

Although the utility's wells are at normal levels for this time of year and workers have noted no decreases in reserve capacity, manager Mike Coyle has requested customers to follow the company's odd-even day lawn sprinkling plan if they must water their lawns.

"It's very simple," Coyle said. "If your house number is an odd number, you water your lawn only on odd-numbered days. If your house number is an even number, you water on even-numbered days."

Coyle added that if home owners must water their lawns, the best times are early morning or late evening. When people water their lawns during the middle of the day, most of the water evaporates before it soaks into the ground.

Using water-saving plumbing fixtures and landscaping with plants which don't need a lot of water can also go a long way towards reducing water consumption, Coyle said.

"Although our water production is less than previous years, we will ask our customers for more voluntary conservation measures if the hot, dry weather persists and the water levels in our wells drops," Coyle said.

by Grace R. Dove

Library news

Summer reading program to end Aug. 13

By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

The summer reading program at the Back Mountain Memorial Library will come to a close on Friday, Aug. 13. The Luzerne County Library System program, "Together Is Better...Let's Read" is supported by McDonald's Family Restaurants and developed by the American Library Association. The final program for the children will be held at 1 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 13, at the library with a special appearance of Ronald McDonald himself. Certificates will be presented at the party to the participants who have read 12 books during the program.

Summer story hours will conclude on August 3 for toddlers and on August 4 for the three to five year olds. The signups for the Fall story hours will be announced in the near future. Volunteer story ladies are still needed for the story hour program. Call the library if you can help with these

programs.

The library is still selling the 'Chefs and Artists' cookbook; which is the first cookbook published by the Back Mountain Memorial Library, sponsored by the dedication of the 'Friends of the Library' who worked diligently in putting this cookbook together. The cost of the cookbook is \$12.95, which includes tax and is available at the information desk in the library.

New books at the library: "Secret Ceremonies" by Deborah Laake is a Mormon woman's intimate diary of marriage and beyond. It is the story of the awakening of a woman who came of age in the early seventies in a manner that would have appeared out-of-step but certainly not tumultuous to an outsider. A picture-perfect life becomes an out-of-kilter dream from which she feared she'd never rouse. It finishes as a triumphant act of self-affirmation.

"A Perry Mason Casebook" by Erle Stanley Gardner includes four

riveting courtroom thrillers in one volume by the best selling writer of his time—anything else is incompetent, irrelevant, immaterial! When the case becomes too hot to handle, the defendant's best chance lies with the savvy, intrepid team. The thrillers: the cases of 'The Gilded Lily'; 'The Daring Decoy'; 'The Fiery Fingers'; and 'The Lucky Loser'. Twists and turns to the last page.

"Vanished" by Danielle Steel is the story of a man and woman faced with an almost unthinkable tragedy—the mysterious abduction of their young son. Their lives are filled with secrets. She is haunted by a past, she has kept hidden from her husband. He is stern and successful, a man everyone admires. When Teddy is kidnapped, suspicions and accusations mingle with terror and heartbreak as the Pattersons, the New York Police and the FBI turn the city and eventually the country, upside down, looking for Teddy. An intriguing tale.

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