

FOR RELEASE:

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IMMEDIATE

Mailed Nov. 28, 1986

YOUNGSTOWN, Ohio - Would you travel 52 hours to a cold, flat region in North-western Canada just to attend class?

Seven Youngstown State University students did just that recently when they joined Dr. Lauren Schroeder of West Middlesex, Pa., YSU professor of biology and an ecology specialist, on a 12-day outdoor class study in Churchill, Manitoba, Canada.

The purpose of the trek, according to Dr. Schroeder, was to allow the students in the Field Ecology class to study ecosystems in a region vastly different from that in Northeast Ohio.

Students who made the 2,500-mile journey (each way) were Frederick Alexander of Liberty; Genine Farran of Austintown; Heidi Frazier of Austintown; Megan Jones of Diamond; Richard Magni of Poland; Linda O'Toole of Youngstown and Heather Stefanish of Lisbon.

Joining them and the professor was Mary Lou Harrison of Liberty, YSU limited service anthropology faculty member.

The region studied from Sept. 1-12 was the tundra area around Churchill where the ecosystem has adapted itself to the cold. Here, the soil is permanently frozen a little more than one meter down. Because the growing season lasts only about 60 days, no crops can be grown there.

In this transition zone between the spruce forest and the flat, windswept tundra, there are small patches of evergreen trees, but they grow exceedingly slow due to the harsh weather. According to Dr. Schroeder, there are trees there that took 200 years just to grow to 20 feet.

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Add One--Tundra

"What strikes you is that it is flat and wet," Dr. Schroeder said. Shallow ponds approximately 3-10 feet deep are characteristic of the area, he added, because the temperatures and evaporation are low.

While nighttime temperatures were in the 30s, the group was fortunate to experience a few days near 60 degrees. Normal temperatures during this period are 40-50 degrees. The end of their stay was marred by snow, freezing temperatures and winds gusting up to 60 miles per hour.

The group missed the tundra's winter weather which is generally 60-below with strong northern winds.

Her first view of the tundra left an immediate impression on Ms. Stefanish.

"The first time I saw the tundra, it was haunting," she said. "I saw twigs in patches and the sun was just coming up. Right then I knew that I wasn't in Kansas anymore."

Ms. Stefanish, a geology major and the only non-biology major among the students, decided to go on the trip following a talk with Dr. Schroeder.

"I thought that it would be a very good learning experience," she said, "and it seemed interesting to see an area from a different point of view (other than biology) and then incorporate the two fields of study."

Also, she'll never forget seeing the bright Northern Lights. "They were spectacular."

It wasn't just a biology course, Magni said; it was a new cultural experience as well -- observing the different environment, seeing a polar bear and the vast Hudson Bay and visiting the Eskimo Museum at Churchill.

The Churchill tundra area was picked because of Dr. Schroeder's experience in cold regions. He previously was an assistant to the director of the National Science Foundation and was a research assistant to the U.S. Antarctic Research Program in 1968, before joining the YSU faculty. He has taken several classes on the trek.

Add Two--Tundra

Looking at an arctic ecosystem is simple and a large percentage of a class is able to understand it in a day or two, Dr. Schroeder said.

Another advantage for the group was that the Churchill Northern Studies Center was located there. It houses lab, dorm and eating facilities for scientists who do research in the area.

At the time of their stay, there were two scientists studying the area's climate while two others were studying snow geese. All four gave lectures to the YSU class during their evening seminars.

Timewise, a normal day went like this: 8 a.m., breakfast, followed by the trip out to the day's study area with packed lunches; 6 p.m., dinner; 7-9 p.m., lab time; and 9-11 p.m., seminars.

During the class hours, they surveyed different habitats, identifying the various types of plantlife found there.

Black flies--small flies that bite--troubled the students during the early, warmer days, Magni said, causing everyone to cover up to avoid getting bit.

On one of the coldest days, with temperatures in the lower 30s, winds gusting up to 70 mph and hail, the students went hiking to an esker--a huge deposit of rocks from a river flowing beneath a glacier.

Though the hike was difficult, Magni described it as "enjoyable."

Ms. Stefanish, on the other hand, described it as "horrible." "A quarter of the way there, it seemed as if we were lost," she said.

She recalled the harsh weather as well as "migrating ponds." According to her, sheets of water from the ponds would be "picked up" by the winds and whisked somewhere else. This caused the hikers to step in water much of the way out and back.

During other trips onto the tundra, the class did projects dealing with the productivity in the arctic region and the types of plants and animals found there.

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Add Three--Tundra

The students also did individual projects.

Magni's research was on the growth of trees below and above a bluff. He is currently checking the patterns in different tree rings in order to report on patterns of good and bad growth seasons.

Ms. Stefanish continues to learn about biology as she completes her project. It involves checking for nutrients in samples taken at different levels of the tundra's soil.

Two students are working together. Ms. Frazier said that she and Ms. Jones are doing a study on willow and birch leaf samples. After the two collected them, Ms. Frazier pressed the leaves and is in the process of measuring the areas eaten by insects. Ms. Jones is testing the leaves to determine chemicals that keep the insects from grazing on them.

Following lab hours at the center, seminars included reports by the students on literature on the arctic ecology.

Among them were Ms. Stefanish's reports on her field of study--the area's geological surroundings.

The 52-hour trip to Churchill--32 hours by car and 20 hours by train--provided a lot of time to think of what to expect, and to remember.

Several students who were hesitant about studying on the tundra are now glad that they went.

Because the area was designated as the "polar bear capital of the world," Ms. Frazier and Ms. Stefanish were nervous about their surroundings. They worried in vain as they saw only one polar bear, and it was at a distance. Both feel that they'll never forget the experiences gained at Churchill.

Magni also had a change of heart. "At first, I didn't want to go. But after I've gone, I'd go again in a minute."

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By John Gatta/YSU News Service
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FOR RELEASE:

CUTLINE

Youngstown State University students brave the harsh weather conditions of the tundra in Northwestern Canada in order to study the arctic ecosystem. Participating in YSU's Field Ecology class are Linda O'Toole of Youngstown; Mary Lou Harrison, Liberty; Megan Jones, Diamond; Genine Farran, Austintown; Heather Stefanish, Lisbon; and Heidi Frazier, Austintown.

(YSU photo by Dr. Lauren Schroeder)

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FOR RELEASE:

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#9

Students in Youngstown State University's Field Ecology class search the tundra in Northwestern Canada for samples of plantlife. They are (from left) Richard Magni of Poland; Linda O'Toole, Youngstown; Mary Lou Harrison, Liberty; Heather Stefanish, Lisbon; Heidi Frazier, Austintown; Genine Farran, Austintown; and Megan Jones, Diamond.

(YSU photo by Dr. Lauren Schroeder)

NEWS SERVICE--JG

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(YSU photo by Dr. Lauren Schroeder)

NEWS SERVICE--JG

86-181

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As part of their field trip to the tundra in Northwestern Canada, YSU students Heather Stefanish of Lisbon, left, and Heidi Frazier of Austintown collect samples of plant life for their Field Ecology class.

(YSU photo by Dr. Lauren Schroeder)

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CUTLINE

As part of their field trip to the tundra in Northwestern Canada, YSU students Heather Stefanish of Lisbon, left, and Heidi Frazier of Austintown collect samples of plant life for their Field Ecology class.

(YSU photo by Dr. Lauren Schroeder)

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86-182

FOR RELEASE:

IMMEDIATE

Mailed Oct. 28, 1986

YOUNGSTOWN, Ohio - Youngstown State University's Dana School of Music will present the YSU Symphonic Wind Ensemble in an Annual Fall Concert at 4 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 9 in the Chestnut Room of Kilcawley Center, Spring Street.

Part of the Dana Concert Series, the concert is free and open to the public.

Co-directed by Joseph Edwards and Les Hicken of Poland, the concert will include works by Franz von Suppe, Karl L. King, Claude T. Smith, Kenneth Alford, Howard Hanson, Percy Aldridge Grainger, Elliot Del Borgo and John Philip Sousa.

The concert is one of the cultural offerings of YSU's College of Fine and Performing Arts.

The 61-member Ensemble includes: (See next pages)

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SYMPHONIC WIND ENSEMBLE

Piccolo

Mary Metcalf, Ashtabula

Flute

Gloria Grande, Farrell, PA
Kimberly Hummel, Evans City, PA
Michael Oleksa, McDonald
*Mary Oleskiewicz, Garrettsville
*Theresa Totten, Cortland
Lisa Weikel, Salem

E-Flat Clarinet

Stephanie Schisler, North Jackson

Clarinet

Ingrid Baumgartel, Liberty
*Anthony Fontana, New Castle, PA
Tim Harker, Poland
Ralph Lutz, Warren
Calvin O'Conner, Youngstown
Kim Setterberg, Brookfield
Denise Severin, Cortland

Alto Sax

*Mathew Ferraro, Bessemer, PA
Bonnie Huish, Austintown

Tenor Sax

Robert Kleinschmidt, Strongsville

Baritone Sax

Ralph Negro, Youngstown

Bassoon

Joseph Sarra, Austintown

Bass Clarinet

Tracy Bell, Leetonia
Joe Grace, Austintown

Baritone

Henry Cartwright, Girard
Tracy Guerin, Austinberg

Trombone

Jeff Althouse, Canfield
Martin Hollister, Mexico, NY
Jeff King, Youngstown
*Jonathan Willis, Canfield

Tuba

David Shoff

Coronet

*Chuck Curry, Flagstaff, AZ
Michael Kamuf, Cleveland
Karla Kisaberth, Milan
Tim Leahey, Altoona, PA
Thomas Scavone, Longmeadow, MA
**John Veneskey, Lake Milton

Trumpet

Michael Kamuf, Cleveland
Tim Leahey, Altoona, PA

Horn

*Kevin Bain, Warren
Anne-Marie Jasecko, Youngstown
Catherine Roche, Brookfield, PA
Dolores Tricomi, Warren

Percussion

Bob Bacha, McDonald
Anthony DiSanza, Chesterland
Kevin Downs, Madison
*Stephen Ley, Pittsburgh, PA
James Richley, Canfield
Thomas Ruggieri, Boardman

Piano

Connie Ascione, New Castle, PA

*denotes principal

**graduate assistant

DANA WIND AND PERCUSSION FACULTY

Flute

Walter Mayhall

Clarinet

Joseph Edwards

Les Hicken

Oboe

Ted Perkins

Bassoon

Donald W. Byo

Saxophone

James Umble

Trumpet

Esotto Pellegrini

French Horn

Lois Hopkins

William Slocum

Trombone

Michael Crist

Tuba-Baritone

John Turk

Percussion

Joseph Parlink

Double Bass

Tony Leonardi