



The Antarctic Society

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ANCHOR AWEIGH

Antarctic science has global consequences. This sentence, in a newly published strategic *vision* for Antarctic and Southern Ocean research, is obvious to us today. It was not always so. In 1960 T.O. Jones, head of NSF's then new Antarctic office, lamented to *Science* that few scientists were attracted to the field and that even a "balanced program" of examining what was there was yet to be achieved.

Fifty-five years later, a now vibrant Antarctic research community has placed before us a bulging suite of globally urgent scientific questions. "The need for prioritization in allocating resources is real," the report's authors write. Turn the page for more about a way forward – a vision – for the United States Antarctic Program.

The strategic vision advocates, among structural improvements, more efficient field work. Rising to this challenge, a new penguin census blends remote and ground counts to give us the good news that far more Adélies are alive today than at the last thorough check in 1993.

International cooperation is a must, the report says. Read below about 171 scientists from 22 countries and their new 510-page Southern Ocean atlas.

Every national program has an HQ. America's is on the seventh floor of a leased building in Arlington, Virginia. Below, we peek at the 48 public servants who rally institutional and financial support – and who choreograph those 3,000 souls whose labors express the National presence on the Ice.

Readers have expressed sufficient interest in an Antarctic Society Gathering in Port Clyde, Maine, next summer that we have set dates for a 3-day affair that will feature presentations, festivity, food, and maybe a few surprises: Friday 15 July through Sunday 17 July 2016. Stay tuned!

Guy Guthridge

A strategic vision for NSF Antarctic and Southern Ocean research

Two years ago, the National Science Foundation decided it needed a “compelling research strategy” for increased understanding of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean. It awarded the National Academy of Sciences \$836,619 to produce one.

The Academy’s Polar Research Board set up a 17-person committee of scientists and educators of whom Robin E. Bell, Columbia University, became chair. The group spent 11 months engaging more than 450 researchers across the United States within the many-disciplined Antarctic community. They started with a town hall at the 2013 American Geophysical Union fall meeting, had a town hall web site through much of 2014, and ran 14 outreach sessions at universities and in conjunction with existing conferences.

Even before it started, the committee had a lot to work with. In 2011 the Academy had published a 195-page evaluation of questions that will drive science in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean over the next 2 decades. The following year a blue ribbon panel showed that science is the visible tip of an iceberg whose underwater portion is operational support; its 224-page study asserts that fundamental change in this support will be required if research needs are to be met.

Coincidentally the international Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) was identifying the most compelling 80 science questions in what it called a horizon scan. Some members of the U.S. committee were part of that process.

To do the actual writing of its report the committee met six times and heard from yet more scientists and representatives of Federal agencies. After, 15 other scientists reviewed the draft in a procedure administered by a separate Academy group to assure

independence and make sure all institutional procedures were considered.

Why all this?

Chuck Kennicutt, Texas A&M, who chaired SCAR from 2008 to 2012, told *Science* (14 August) the studies are forcing researchers to decide what's important and justify their work to a broader audience. “These reports lay out why we want to spend the money it costs to be in Antarctica. They show that the community is organized.”

The *Science* article says infrastructure upgrades are sorely needed; the NAS report “adds to this sense of urgency.”

The committee’s report recommends acknowledging a central reality, and focusing on three other distinct priorities. The reality is that to predict where major advances will happen is impossible. Continue, it argues, “across all major areas of Antarctic and Southern Ocean science, the curiosity-based research driven by proposals from principal investigators.” But, it says, look for efficiencies. Improve coordination and data sharing among independent studies.

The priorities start with how fast and by how much sea level will rise. To know this, we need to know why the ice sheets are changing and how they will change. Past ice sheet change will help us understand rates and processes.

The second big question regards how biota evolve and adapt to the changing environment. We need to decode the bases of biological adaptation and response across organisms and ecosystems.

The third question uses, but does not help to explain, Antarctica: How did the universe begin and what are the underlying physical laws that govern its evolution and ultimate fate? A next-generation cosmic microwave background program is envisioned, building on accomplishments at South Pole Station and elsewhere across the Antarctic.

Recalling the above iceberg analogy (a lot of support is essential for a given level

of science), the committee sees seven critical areas of operational and program improvement. Access to remote field sites has to be improved even beyond America's already excellent capability. Ships are needed, and that includes a new logistics icebreaker as well as research platforms. Observations that are *long term* are critical for understanding the natural environment and its human influences. Communications and data transmission have to be improved. Data must be managed to be preserved and accessible. Coordination needs to be improved at all levels, ranging from within NSF to among nations.

And, seventh, education and outreach are critical to this as to any public program: give people a sense of connection to the Antarctic to help them better appreciate the scientific and societal value of research in this remote part of the world.

A concluding thought of the report centers on the committee's hope that the ideas it raises, informed by researchers across the country, will be a framework for helping NSF make choices. Antarctic science has a pivotal role in understanding how Earth and the universe operate.

As evidence for major shifts in Earth's climate accumulates, the role of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean is increasingly apparent, the report says. Continued discovery and awe, with the need to understand how these complex systems work, motivate the pursuit of science in the Antarctic, along with the infrastructure and logistics needed to support it.

Both *EOS* and *Science* give sympathetic evaluations of the new report. "The United States' research in Antarctica needs fresh initiatives and better equipment," writes Carolyn Gramling in *Science*. "But how to afford them remains a conundrum."

Read [A Strategic Vision for NSF Investments in Antarctic and Southern Ocean Research](#) (170 p., 2015) free on the Academy's web site (nas.edu), or buy a paperback there for \$50.

First global census of the Adélie penguin

The decline of Adélie penguin populations along the Antarctic Peninsula is a familiar, discouraging story to travelers who visit that region of the continent. So a census published in 2014 is welcome news because it reports big increases in breeding populations elsewhere.

H.J. Lynch, Stony Brook University, and M.A. LaRue, University of Minnesota, used ground counts and satellite images to find a total breeding population 53-percent larger (3.79-million breeding pairs in 251 breeding populations) than the last estimate, in 1993.

The Antarctic Peninsula decline is more than offset, they find, by increases in East Antarctica. Approximately 21-percent of the population breeds along the Antarctic Peninsula, 33-percent in the Ross Sea, and 30-percent in East Antarctica.

Their work also is the first abundance estimate for 41 previously unsurveyed colonies, with 420,000 breeding pairs, and it reports 17 previously unknown colonies, 11 of which may be recent colonizations representing some 5-percent of the total increase. Adélies are philopatric – they like to return to a particular place – so the new colonies suggest resilience, adaptation, in the face of changing environmental conditions.

Census by satellite isn't direct counting. The images usually aren't sharp enough to distinguish species, but spectral and spatial characteristics of the guano can do the trick. The researchers explain: "Except where constrained by topography, Adélie penguins nest in a close-packed nesting formation with a relatively homogeneous nest density that allows us to convert an area of nesting (as identified by the area of guano staining) to an estimate of the number of pairs breeding within."

They are confident in their method and thus use "census," rather than "survey,"

to describe both the field counts and the satellite population estimates. “Our estimates reflect (as far as we are able to determine) a complete enumeration of the population of each breeding site and, taken in aggregate, of the entire global Adélie population.”

The [full paper](#), in *The Auk*, 131(4): 457-466, is online and available to anyone. NSF is supporting the work with two 5-year grants (2008-2018) that add to \$907,951. With 3 years still to go, the grants have produced 32 publications including this one.

Adélie is a “sentinel” species, or what ornithologist David Ainley’s 2002 book calls a bellwether of climate change. Their importance as a proxy monitor for fisheries, state Lynch and LaRue, is driving a renaissance in the tracking of penguin populations using satellite imagery. Their work relied on manual identification and interpretation, but automated methods in development will enable regular monitoring across the breeding range. This topic is of interest in particular for designing a sustainable krill fishery, and the 53-percent Adélie increase suggests current estimates of krill consumption by Adélie are underestimated.

Apologies for doing this summary more than a year after the paper appeared. Your editor became aware of it because of a reference in the August 2015 *SCAR Bulletin*.

Biogeographic Atlas of the Southern Ocean

This massive volume, printed in 2014 and still moving toward full online availability, is said to be the largest contribution in biology of the 2007-2009 International Polar Year. Undertaken as part of the global Census of Marine Life (a \$650-million endeavor funded by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, New York), it enables us, states the preface, to understand at a glance “the grand carousel that whirls around Antarctica.”

The Total Foundation, Paris, and the Cosmos Prize Foundation, Tokyo, also provided financial support.

Twenty-six Americans are among the 171 scientists who contributed material, and six of the 26 had NSF grants totaling \$2.2-million at least partly for the purpose. But this initiative started with a 5-year Census of Antarctic Marine Life (CAML) led by the Australian Antarctic Division. Andrew Clarke, emeritus fellow, British Antarctic Survey, writes in the volume’s foreword that the census delivered “the single largest step in our knowledge of Antarctic marine diversity and biogeography since the first half of the 20th century.”

SCAR’s Marine Biodiversity Information Network archived the 2.9 million items of georeferenced biodiversity data, covering 14,000 species, that went into compiling the volume’s maps, tables, and text.

All together, the volume involved researchers from 22 nations.

The project in short is a new synthesis of Southern Ocean patterns and processes covering benthos, zooplankton, nekton, birds and seals. It’s a benchmark to help define present provinces and predict changes under various climates.

It also predicts where species will be according to abiotic factors. Dynamic editions will connect to other databases, enabling more data visualization and analysis.

The first task was to figure out what’s known. Claude De Broyer and Philippe Koubbi, senior editors, write in their introduction, “The first and fundamental step of the Atlas project was to compile and database all occurrence records available from the literature (since the very beginning of Antarctic exploration), from museum collections, as well as from CAML and other recent Antarctic sampling campaigns.”

John Davenport, University College Cork, Ireland, provides an informed 2-page

review in *Antarctic Science* (2015), concluding with these sentences: “a substantial tour-de-force, with a few flaws that no doubt stem from the admirable speed with which this book has been produced, plus the increasing unwillingness of scientists to display their most exciting research findings in a forum other than high-impact research journals. Necessarily the market for this book is limited, but it is a landmark reference volume that should be in the libraries of all marine institutes and every university that teaches and researches life and environmental sciences. It is an excellent showcase of the value of modern scientific power combined with cooperative and altruistic endeavor.”

The project has worthwhile maps and other information even if you're not an Antarctic biologist. Your editor has looked at plenty online, but has not seen the actual book, a paperback of which can be bought from amazon.co.uk for £80. Further description, and some chapters, are at biodiversity.aq.

The headquarters outfit, U.S. Antarctic Program

A literal organizational interpretation of the celebrated 1970 Presidential pronouncement that science is the principal expression of U.S. Antarctic policy is this: Eight program managers on the seventh floor of the National Science Foundation in Arlington, Virginia, hold America's Antarctic future in their hands.

In reality, it's more complicated. Still, simplistic explanation can clarify complexity: NSF's job – those eight folks and another 36 heading up operational, environmental, communications, safety, and leadership roles, is to keep getting and spending the money that made U.S. scientists lead (or sole) authors of 26.7 percent of the 10,942 Antarctic papers published globally from 1980 to 2004 *and*

that established the USA as the most networked country in Antarctic science, according to a 2008 study.

The 48 Antarctic people in the polar office are part of NSF's 2,100 staff whose \$7.3-billion (this year) supports a quarter of the Nation's academic scientific and engineering basic research and education.

The simple, effective model is that scientists at universities send research project proposals to NSF. It's not easy. In fiscal 2014 NSF funded 11,000 of the 48,100 proposals received and put through competitive merit review. Internal operations including review accounted for 6 percent of the NSF budget. The rest of the money went out the door to put the country at the leading edge of discovery in places like the Antarctic.

Your editor's perspective based on 38 years with the polar office is that what keeps staff there is working with top researchers on vital scientific questions while figuring out how to support them in an inhospitable climate where you have to import everything. Along with that you have international collaboration, the never-quite-absent geopolitical posturing, and the intriguing operational aspects of getting around in anything from an airplane to a bunny boot.

What drives 'em nuts at the polar office is there's never enough money to do it all just right. Let's be specific.

“Under current practice,” reads a 2012 blue ribbon review of the Antarctic program, “when NSF and its contractors must choose between repairing a roof and conducting science, science usually prevails. Only when the science is seriously disrupted because the roof begins to collapse will it be replaced; until then, it is likely only to be repaired. Examples of this phenomenon abound: a warehouse where some areas are avoided because the forklifts fall through the floor; kitchens with no grease traps; outdoor storage of supplies that can be found only by

digging through deep piles of snow; gaps so large under doors that the wind blows snow into the buildings; IGY-era vehicles; antiquated communications; an almost total absence of modern inventory management systems; indoor storage inefficiently dispersed in more than 20 buildings at McMurdo; 350,000 pounds of scrap lumber awaiting return to the U.S. for disposal; and more. The status quo is not an option; sooner or later the atrophying logistics infrastructure will need to be upgraded or replaced. Failure to do so will increase logistics costs until they squeeze out funding for science.”

And yet, as those statistics a few paragraphs back show, science thrives. Some of the above complaints have been fixed or are getting there. The dilemma (fortunate from the human safety perspective) is nothing fails dramatically enough to motivate a slug of new money from – where else? – Congress to really and permanently raise efficiency.

In its 2016 proposal to the Congress NSF identifies a project, Antarctic Infrastructure Modernization for Science, that would move the program toward more efficient science support. The concept includes replacing the Palmer Station pier and redeveloping McMurdo’s support facilities, communications, runways, and ship support. This operations upgrade is one of three “key priorities” in the polar programs budget proposal.

So the new strategic vision from the Academy (see the above story) is a big deal. It slingshots earlier reports (issued in the last 4 years) using recommendations that are fine-grained enough to be practical and that are aligned with the money likely to be available.

And with all those reports finished and distributed, it falls to the 48 folks in HQ on the seventh floor of the NSF building to convert mere printed pages to Antarctic reality.

Correction – or perhaps an explanation

The July issue, page 1, calls Maine the most northeastern state. Member Robert Mayo Failing, MD, of Santa Barbara, writes:

“I suspect by now a number of readers have noted the error. The rough north and east coordinates of Maine are 47.20 N lat., 67.00 W long.

“The most northeastern USA state is Alaska. The coordinates of Attu Island, one of the Near Islands in Alaska’s Aleutian chain, are 52.56 N lat., 173.00 E long. Alaska is also the USA’s most western state.”

Your editor replied. “Someone in a plane flying west to east would see Alaska first, Maine last. That’s how I was thinking. It’s the tyranny of the Greenwich prime meridian that I overlooked.

“Your email got me interested, and it wasn’t ‘til 1884 that 0° became today’s 0°. A score or so candidates lost out to the one used now. If only Gerardus Mercator’s 1595 prime had held!” [Mercator’s prime meridian was at present-day 14°01’W.]

Celebrating the life of Winifred Reuning

by Lynn Teo Simarski

Winifred May Reuning--NSF editor, writer, webmaster, and warm-hearted friend and colleague to so many for decades--died at age 62 on 4 August 2015 in Alexandria, Virginia. “Winnie”—as she was known to all--was a lodestar who guided the National Science Foundation’s polar office from the old way of communicating with scientists and the public to our on-line world.

During 35 years at NSF, Winnie brought her twinned gifts of memory and empathy to bolster those who worked with her. “Winnie had a memory for people, documents and events that was astonishing,”

said Guy Guthridge, this newsletter's editor, who originally recommended her hiring at the NSF. "Countless times, after exhausting my own search, I quickly got the missing information from Winnie."



Winifred May Reuning

As for empathy, Winnie often seemed to have telepathic fibers throughout the polar office and beyond that helped her colleagues overcome bureaucratic obstacles. She was invariably ready to listen and dispense solace along with her trademark no-holds-barred laugh. Near her desk was a chair reserved for guests, concealed like a confessional within books and papers. (As a neophyte in NSF's public affairs office, I benefitted immeasurably from Winnie's emotional and organizational wisdom.)

Winnie graduated as valedictorian of her high school class in Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania. She studied English literature and writing at Hobart and William Smith Colleges. In her earlier NSF years, she was one of the pioneering women to deploy to Antarctica. In 1980, she became editor of NSF's *Antarctic Journal of the United States*, with her name on every masthead from 1980 through the final issue in 2005.

A key player in the fledgling NSF-wide webmaster group, she developed and

introduced the online identity of the Division of Polar Programs. She also collaborated with the Department of State to publish the first online edition of the *Handbook of the Antarctic Treaty System*, for which she received an NSF award. Over the years, when approached at the last minute by countless higher-ups, Winnie rescued them with her ability to create slides and presentations.

Winnie's memorial service on 15 August was led by an old college friend, Minister Robert John Andrews, who shared many English classes with her. His eloquent testimonial to Winnie wove his own comments, poems, lyrics from Van Morrison and the Beatles (Winnie loved music), and biblical passages.

Talks by Winnie's family members celebrated her accomplishments and her spirit. Winnie's siblings spoke of her unconventionality, and a younger sister, sharing a room with a teenage Winnie, recalled being awakened by the earthy cries of Janis Joplin at two in the morning. Winnie also loved science fiction and discussing any and all topics at length.

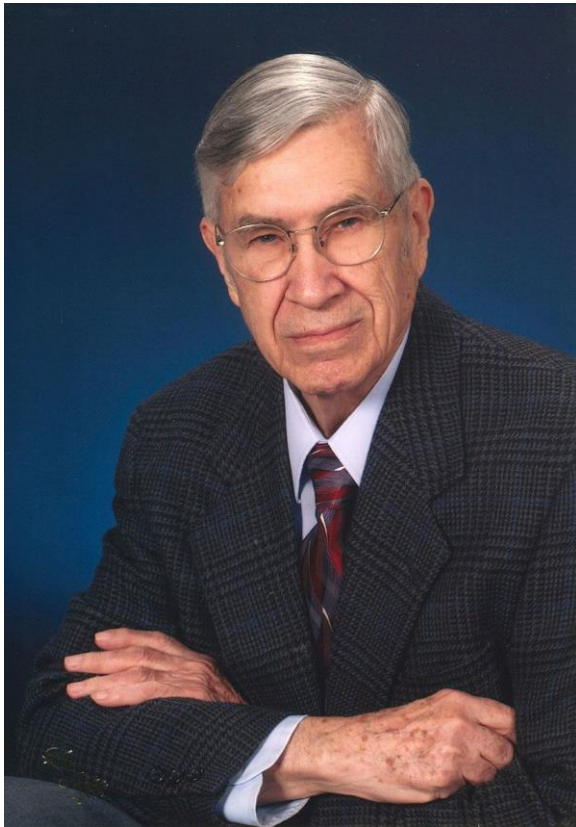
At the service, Andrews evoked Winnie's youth with a poem from Yeats ("a glimmering girl/With apple blossom in her hair/Who called me by my name and ran/And faded through the brightening air.") He also recalled how, after 40 years, he and Winnie finally reconnected this summer in Pennsylvania. "She taught me over that lunch how her Antarctic world wasn't a single discipline but many, all interconnected," he said; "where even a cold desert offers the promise of life."

In that cold desert, Winnie is commemorated for her contributions by Reuning Glacier, named for her. It is located on Alexander Island adjoining the south-most part of the Antarctic Peninsula. Now this place takes on special meaning. As Reverend Andrews quoted from the Bible, "For where your treasure is, there will be your heart also." We lost Winnie way

too soon, but her heart lives on in those she treasured and in Antarctica.

Quiet, unassuming, lovable Bob Allen succumbs

by Paul Dalrymple



Robert J. Allen

If ever an Antarctic was loved by one and all, it was Bob Allen of the USGS. He was at the beck and call of those who wanted an official photographic portrait of a geographical feature named after them. No matter how obscure the feature might have been, he came up with a product. One such finding was that of Mount Benkert, Antarctica, named for a dear friend of mine, an admiral in the U.S. Coast Guard. Aerial photography in the USGS archive showed Mount Benkert to be nothing more than a nipple of a snow hill. But Bob found it!

Ruth Siple and I went to the open hearing honoring the passing of Bob's first

wife. Bob brought hundreds of pictures and told us how wonderful she had been. On our departure, I said to Ruth that after a marriage like that one he would never marry again. How wrong I was. Within a year he had remarried, this time to a working cohort in the USGS, and this marriage also lasted over 20 years.

After my retirement from the Washington scene, I called Bob frequently from my retreat in Maine, and Bob regaled me with stories about various and sundry women friends who wanted him to marry them. It seemed that most were single and were looking for someone who had good health insurance. Each newsletter that I sent to Bob, I wrote a prelude warning him to stay single. Whether I had any influence I will never know, but he never tried a third marriage.

Robert J. Allen was born in Martinsville, Virginia, on 12 January 1923. His father died when Bob was 6. During the Depression, at about 10, he was sent with his brother Jack to be raised in the Pythian Home of New Market, Virginia, which the Knights of Pythias operated for orphans and aged widows.

The Army drafted Bob in 1943 and held him in reserve until calling him up for Korea. He trained in engineering, leadership, cartography, marksmanship, and artillery.

Honorably discharged, he began work in the U.S. Geological Survey. He was there for 60 years as a cartographer, creating and verifying maps all over the globe and even of the Moon and Mars, but his specialty was Antarctica. His final postings were with the SCAR library and the Antarctic Resource Center at the USGS in Reston, Virginia. He was honored in the Congressional Record for his achievements and his service to U.S. Antarctic researchers. He never visited the frozen continent.

Robert Allen had survived heart surgeries, bladder cancer, and melanoma. In his advancing years he suffered from dementia and heart failure. After a final

heart attack, he passed away on 10 July 2015.

Lakes under the ice: Antarctica's secret garden

Curiosity-driven science not connected to a specific social need has high priority in the strategic vision report that is the first item of this newsletter. A much discussed example is discovery and examination over the last few decades of liquid water under both the East and West Antarctic ice sheets.

In the 20 August 2014 *Nature*, Douglas Fox calls the water's microbes, and ecosystems yet to be discovered, Antarctica's secret garden: in the first direct sample, retrieved in 2013 from Lake Whillans 800 meters below the West Antarctic Ice Sheet, John Priscu of Montana State University and colleagues found 130,000 cells of microbial life in each millimeter of lake water. Nearly 4,000 species of bacteria and archaea are represented. "I was surprised by how rich the ecosystem is," Priscu said.

Scientists are paying attention. In March of this year the seventh international meeting on subglacial lake environments was held over 2 days at [Chicheley Hall](#) in the United Kingdom. Sixty researchers from a dozen nations reviewed results and planned future work.

Three priorities emerged: to develop technology for clean, reliable deep-ice access and in situ data acquisition; to consider a variety of subglacial environments for exploration rather than singling out fewer targets; and to share logistics, equipment, and samples internationally.

In the 10 July 2015 *EOS*, three scientists who attended the Chicheley Hall meeting write that researchers now have an excellent understanding of how to explore a subglacial lake, first envisaged 20 years ago for East Antarctica's subglacial Lake Vostok (which is the size of one of the Great Lakes).

You drill using hot water, deploy a variety of instruments, and use proved cleanliness techniques. "It is entirely feasible," they write, "that this and other subglacial lakes can be explored thoroughly in the coming decade, making research priorities set at the meeting pivotal to the history of Antarctic subglacial exploration."

Another new iceberg

[Iceberg B-35](#), which calved in August, at 12 by 8 miles is no record-breaker in size, and in fact it's smaller than B-31, which broke from the same area in 2013.

But B-35 calved from much-studied Pine Island Glacier, which drains a large fraction of the West Antarctic Ice Sheet and which has been documented to be undergoing rapid change.

Recent issues of this newsletter have discussed the increasing loss of ice from numerous coastal glaciers in both East and West Antarctica. B-35 is part of a saga whose next chapter remains to be written. Stay tuned.

Antarcticans drink too much?

Wired magazine on 5 October wrote that, to stay sane, "many" scientists, technicians, cooks, and drivers at McMurdo and South Pole "employ the social lubricant of alcohol to decompress." A 5 July report by the Inspector General for NSF about safety and health in the U.S. Antarctic Program inspired the story.

At South Pole Station, the IG auditors had found a scientist brewing beer in a lab, which violates NSF's Antarctic code of conduct.

Peter West of NSF's polar office later informed *Wired* that the scientist had left Pole, and NSF advised the scientist's institution about the violation. "Alcohol-related misconduct is not disproportionately

represented at the Antarctic stations,” Peter is quoted in the article.

In its report, the IG’s finding number 4 is that breathalyzer tests could enhance workplace safety.

Wired observes that Antarctica isn’t U.S. territory. “Who would administer the tests? Where would people challenge the order, or the results? Antarctica doesn’t have any courtrooms or, thankfully, many lawyers,” it notes.

Separately, Peter commented to *Wired* that the audit confirmed NSF and its contractor, Lockheed Martin, are effective at ensuring health and safety of the participants across the USAP. Nevertheless, NSF is considering the effectiveness and legality of using breathalyzers in Antarctica.

Other news organizations are evaluating the IG’s report. Peter told your editor, “The story is too good to die.”

Antarctic People

Entire books by and about Antarcticans, each in their way, describe the strong personal and geographic affinities that develop after a spell in the Antarctic. A contract employee with long ties to the U.S. Antarctic Program catches the spirit in 44 lines:

It takes a special kind of fool
To leave a home and job, or school
And pack a bag and grab a plane
And leave behind the 'safe and sane'

To go somewhere remote as Mars
With no McDonald's, T.V., or cars
No Exxon stations, no Pizza Huts,
No 7-11's - you'd have to be nuts!

To cast one's lot with a gang of freaks
Misfits, outcasts, grouches and geeks
Collectors of rocks, of eggs, of scales
Sewer repairmen, benders of nails

Far-fetched minds from far-flung places

Wild lights in their eyes, strange knots in
their laces

Strange tastes in music, strange tastes in
food

Strange hair; strange clothing; good God,
what a brood!

What fool wants to go where those maniacs
are?

Each one a stranger, each stranger bizarre
Who'd leave behind all that's comfortably
known

For a place without streetlights, police, or
ozone?

A fool, perhaps, with the mind of a child
Alert and curious, friendly and wild
Foolishly tickled to witness a dawn
Delighted when two other fools sing a song

Or perhaps a fool with a cynical bent
Who scoffed at society, got up and went
Broke off and ran from what others hold
dear
Went as far as one can - and washed ashore
here

Or it could be a fool of Columbus's mold
Miraculous worlds to seek and behold
More faith in tomorrow than any 'today'
No 'here' as delightful as getting away

Fools? Perhaps; but special past doubt
Children and skeptics from the wide world
about
Gathered by chances as random as dice
And sent to this 'home for the way-weird':
the Ice

And here to be tortured, ignored, and
distressed
And find in each other the strength for the
test
And find in these fools the best friends
they've known
And see in themselves a fool of their own

So they bond together in a blissful way

Hopeful fools in their world for a day
As a part-time tribe, a fore-doomed race
Good friends? Total strangers? Both at once
- what a place

Jim 'Thumper' Porter
24 February 1989
Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station

To read the poem online see
<http://quest.arc.nasa.gov/antarctica/background/NSF/poem.html>.

Gathering in Maine 2016 or 2017

by Paul Dalrymple

Our request to members in the July 2015 newsletter (page 2) for expressions of interest in attending an Antarctic Society Gathering in Port Clyde, Maine, got suggestions for one in 2016 and others for 2017.

If you have not written or called me and are interested in attending a Gathering, please do so. If 2016 becomes the selected year, we will publish dates and plans in the January 2016 newsletter so people will have time to book lodging and travel.

We envision a 2-day event in July of socializing, a seafood dinner or two, and the famous Antarctic Society Garage Theater featuring members and others presenting talks about Antarctic topics.

On a third day an optional day or evening cruise will be booked on one of the local tour boats. For many visitors to Maine, a coastal cruise is a must-do.

If you've been to one of these Gatherings you're probably thinking about coming again. If you haven't, you're in for a treat if you like coastal Maine in summer and things Antarctic.