

In Brief

Cause of death determined

McMurdo Station radar technician John Biesiada died of a large blood clot in his lungs, according to a New Zealand Coroner's Office report released last week.

The report, issued January 15, stated that Biesiada was killed by a massive pulmonary embolism following severe clotting in the veins of his left leg, which he had broken several weeks earlier.

Biesiada, 43, a Canadian citizen and resident of St. Catharines, Ontario, was pronounced dead by McMurdo medical personnel in the early morning of January 8. He had been scheduled to be flown to Christchurch later that same day to receive further medical treatment for his leg.

The coroner conducted the autopsy January 11 in Christchurch, shortly after Biesiada's body was transported there from Antarctica.

Biesiada was a civilian employee of Aviation Technical Services, a contractor of Space and Naval Warfare Center, based in Charleston, S.C.

According to Dwight Fisher, McMurdo's NSF representative, Biesiada's family in Canada have been notified of the coroner's findings. They have also received Biesiada's personal effects from McMurdo, Fisher said.

Palmer Station update

By Bob Farrell

Palmer Station has started the new year with the beginning of the annual Long Term Environmental Research cruise. It's a busy time with the Laurence M. Gould research vessel at the pier and the science groups busily moving equipment onto the ship and getting things set up. It's a high-energy port call with a sometimes festive air, as old friends return to the station.

Several new arrivals joined our community, including National Science Foundation representative Polly Penhale, a teacher from Texas, a reporter/photographer team from U.S. News and World Report and a freelance photographer.

Members of TO-396 arrived as well, and they've installed some temporary infrasound monitoring equipment that is testing the feasibility of using Palmer Station as a monitoring site for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, which prohibits the testing of nuclear weapons. The leader of this group is Antarctic veteran Charles "Buck" Wilson, who wintered at Little America back in 1958.

The summer season has reached its peak now, with lots of new wildlife in the area. The tour season has also come to Palmer, with visits from four vessels in the past two weeks.

The week in weather

Palmer

H/ 41 F

L/ 29 F

- Min Wind Chill: -2 F

Max Wind: 68 mph

South Pole

H/ -18 F

L/ -27 F

- Min Wind Chill: -69 F

Max Wind: 25 mph

McMurdo

H/ 36 F

L/ 12 F

Min Wind Chill: -2 F

Max Wind: 47 mph



Gary Tickner, a cargo handler at the South Pole, waits for an LC-130 ski-plane to stop before loading passengers' luggage on board. Photo by Jeff Inglis.



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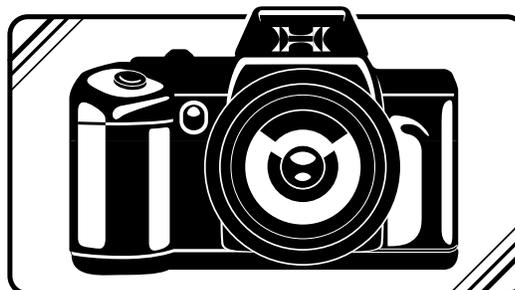
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