

Beringia Youth Showcase



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Expedition Anadyr 2011

PRESENTERS

- **Michelle Whaley**, Russian/English Teacher, Anchorage West High School, Anchorage, Alaska; phone: (907)742-2500, email: whaley_michele@asdk12.org
- **Sarah Warnock**, Education Program Manager, Alaska Geographic, Anchorage, Alaska
- **Noah Warnock**, Student, Anchorage West High School, Anchorage, Alaska
- **Mariah Savoie**, Student, Anchorage West High School, Anchorage, Alaska

ABSTRACT

In the late spring - early summer of 2011, a group of Anchorage West High school student and chaperones visited Anadyr', the Chukotka capital, during the final stage of their project for face-to-face work with their Russian counterparts. Sarah Warnock of Alaska Geographic accompanied the students on this trip. During their visit in Anadyr', the group stayed at the lyceum (the boarding school) where 11th and 12th graders receive a high quality education. They can choose to specialize in humanitarian sciences or in science and math.

While in Anadyr', West High students were engaged in various scientific activities that included bird observation, documenting plant data, testing water quality and measuring carbon emissions. The students kept a detailed photographic/videographic log of their activities. Students also interviewed Native residents and long-time residents of Chukotka to collect anecdotal reports about changes in flora and fauna. They learned how the arctic tundra has been a means of survival for centuries.

Some of the collected data, such as comparisons between disturbed and undisturbed tundra regions, will be given to Cornell University as a baseline for future studies. Students mapped each carbon emission site with a GPS.

The students did extensive bird watching and enjoyed little discoveries: for example, a bird species called House Sparrow that previously was not observed in Anadyr' area was recorded during the last visit. It came to Chukotka in shipping containers. Three bird species total were identified that were not on the list for the Anadyr' region, and the students plan to send this information to Alexander Andreev in the Magadan Ornithological Laboratory. The students plan to do a complete list of birds in Anadyr' for future researchers.

One of the species the students observed was Ruffs. Students made observations of their unusual "dance," a courting behavior, and made extensive notes in their bird journals.

Local television stations filmed students during their field trips and interviewed several of them for the local TV news.

The exchange students had an opportunity for cultural immersion. Although some of the students were already good Russian speakers, they had Russian language lessons, learned how to perform Chukotka Native dances and were introduced to the masterwork of ivory carving.

The West High students also conducted a series of interviews with Russian students about being leaders in their communities and staying involved in global projects on improving communication between Russia and the U.S. and on climate change in the Arctic.

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Arctic Teens Speak Out: *The Lost Dances*

PRESENTER

D'Anne Hamilton, Executive Producer of *The Lost Dances*, P.O. Box 296, Kotzebue, AK 99752; phone: (907)223-7661, email: dhamilton1283@mac.com

ABSTRACT

In 2005, a group of youth in Kotzebue picked up video cameras for the first time, to document their pursuit of "*The Lost Dances: a Look at Traditional Native Dancing in Kotzebue, Alaska and Chukotka, Russia.*" Over the next six years, the students recorded interviews and dance performances on both sides, learning as they went about the specifics of using media technology, about traditional Native dance and about themselves.

Nome Community Center Youth Exchange

PRESENTER

Jacob Martin, Senior Student, Nome Beltz High School, Nome, Alaska; email: sunagazuk@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

My presentation will be on the exchange trip I attended in 2010 with the Nome Community Center, which was funded through a grant from the National Park Service and the Shared Beringian Heritage Program. Through this grant, 12 youth, 4 chaperones and 1 translator were able to travel over to Provideniya and New Chaplino. The exchange was a 7-day experience of a lifetime for the exchanges and the host families involved. It was arranged for the youth to stay with host families, which was a quite an experience for both the American guests and the Russian hosts. Nearly every moment was enjoyed with activities involving the different customs and culture, from hiking a mountain, playing different sports and games in the local school gym and rowing in a whaling boat across the bay. Not only did we have a chance to partake in their lifestyles, we made a presentation to share our culture, history and modern-day lifestyle with whoever attended in a local presentation in New Chaplino.