



S61

NEWSLETTER

March 2022

TIME IS FLYING

As busy as the month of March was, it seems as though our eyes blinked and time moved swiftly from February to end of March. Unfavourable weather has interrupted our cause outside, blizzards and white-outs with speeds faster than most cars driving on the N1 are becoming common sight to us who are new to this land. Fortunately we have soldiered on and accomplished to work safely with no injuries or accidents being reported.

How beautiful it is here when the weather is clear. During the daytime one can enjoy the pristine and abundance of snow as far as the eye can see. The vastness of it all is truly a luxury that a camera lens cannot afford those who don't see with their own eyes.

The team is gelling and dinner time serves as evidence of the unity amongst the team. Table bangs and laughter befitting a comedian receiving a standing ovation are the standard of the night during dinner time. Individual talents are emerging and I dare say some of the guys should have been culinary professionals; the work in the kitchen is truly pleasurable in the stomach.

For this March issue of our newsletter Eric our Snr Meteorological Technician's star will shine brightest as we get to hear of his travels and stay thus far in Antarctica.



The tale of Eric Randall

Q1- How did you hear or find about SANAE?

“I found out about SANAE through a Whats-app group back in SA. The group consisted of ex-classmates and lectures from the South African Weather Service. I am a meteorologist /weather forecaster.”

Q2- Share your highlights of the journey to Antarctica

“The highlights of the journey, for me, as cliché as it may sound was being on the ship and experiencing the vast ocean in a completely unique way. I had previously never been on a ship. I have an appreciation for nature so having eyes to see was enough for me. Additionally, the weather we experienced whilst on the vessel was exceptionally rare to see. It was awesome, so were the people.”

Q3- How is your stay thus far?

“At the moment, 3 months in, I feel great. It has been a fantastic adventure. It is better than I could have imagined.”

Q4- What work do you do in Antarctica?

“I watch the sky, quite literally actually. My job description is a meteorological technician. Fundamentally, I observe weather, capture data and keep the sensors alive and well.”

Q5- How does your work here add value to the people back home in RSA?

“Recording weather has major benefits to climatologists and meteorologists all around the world. The captured data allows for research to be done. Increase in data captured increases the proficiency of the analysis. Weather in Antarctica directly affects South Africa. Cold fronts that move over South Africa originate from the southern polar region. So if we understand more about weather in Antarctica, we will understand more about weather in South Africa.”

Q6- Is it as cold as you anticipated?

“No, it is far frostier. The temperatures down here are other worldly. It is truly incredible how cold it gets. Mind-blowing!! ”

Q7- Have you picked up any new skills during your stay thus far?

“Learning about the sensors I look after has given me new understanding about the technical side of the electrical based equipment”.

Q8- What do you do for fun?

“I frequently visit the gym and my love for it has grown over the past few months. I enjoy playing pool, reading and filming and editing videos are my hobbies down here. Watching a good movie always helps pass the time. Learning Chess theory and tactics is another favourite of mine”.

Q9- What do you miss from RSA

“I miss my people, friends, family and church. Taking a jog on the Umhlanga promenade is definitely something I crave. I miss the everyday activities that I would do with friends back home. Watching sport, going to the beach, having a run or just talking with old friends.”

Well that was a glimpse into Eric's life and activities here Antarctica, how grateful we are to have him in our team. His observations keep us safe from going outside in dangerous conditions. If Eric says red we stay and if Eric says green we are good to go. It has not been so rosy for Eric in the games room though unfortunately losing his stand as King of the pool table. Thulani has risen above all although with some resistance from Aphiwe and JC. We had many in-house tournaments were Thulz reigned supreme thus for the month of March he is named King and champion of the pool table.



How joyous it looks to be on top haha. Congratulations to the King.

Let me leave you with a fact about Antarctica:

The snow and water we get from the snow here is non-conductive. What that means is that electricity is not conducted, truly amazing however safe work practices are maintained and I always test with my meter before doing any work on live equipment.

Goodbye!