

Weather

# Ocean's deep the last frontier

From "OCEAN," Page 1

there. Their sub kicked up so much of the sea floor that all they could see out the window was a murky fog.

That dive was in 1960 and no one has been back since. Unmanned subs have ventured that deep, but there's a difference between seeing something remotely on a computer monitor and being there, seeing it up close.

"It's the last frontier for science and exploration on this planet," Cameron said in a ship-to-shore interview with The Associated Press. "It's to draw public attention to the oceans and continued need for exploration as well as stewardship. It would be a good thing if we understand the oceans before we destroy the life that's in them."

Cameron plans to spend at least six hours on the bottom in his cramped, almost form-fitting sub, Deepsea Challenger. He plans to film an undersea documentary with his partner National Geographic, including 3D footage.

Craig McLean, chief of research for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, calls Cameron a hero.

"This is an awakening for the public on how little we know about our planet," McLean said. "We don't have to look up in the sky to find what's out there. We've got it in our oceans."

Andy Bowen, director of the deep sea sub lab at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, remotely guided the unmanned Nereus to the same sea floor for 13 hours in 2009. He describes the pitch dark, icy cold place as "the most hostile, most remote environment on the face of the planet."

McLean said the 16,500 pounds-per-square inch pressure isn't bone-crushing, "it's obliterating." Cameron said if there were a leak, the pressure would crush him so fast he couldn't even cry out.

But getting to that dangerous place, Bowen said, "is frankly intoxicating."

Cameron already feels the majesty and he hasn't been quite that deep yet. Last week,

on a test dive for his 12-ton, 25-foot vertical sub, Cameron went to a different trench 5.1 miles down. That set a record for the deepest solo sub dive and Cameron was mesmerized by deep sea anemones that looked like hanging gardens, tube worms and jellyfish that would pulse by.

There was a moment when Cameron was photographing a jellyfish that swam right in front of his viewport, backlit by special lighting techniques.

"I just saw this very ancient and very simple animal," Cameron recalled. "The thought that popped through my head was that God must have been proud the day that he created the jellyfish."

And, Cameron added, he's an atheist.

Cameron's plan for the deeper dive depends on calm weather and pinpoint timing to conserve battery life. In 1960, Walsh and Piccard took nearly five hours to reach the bottom.

Cameron said his plan "is to scream to the bottom as fast as possible, then work at the bottom in the dark, slightly-above-freezing water will only take 90 minutes and technically there's enough life support for a 56-hour dive. Cameron won't say how much the expedition costs.

While it may seem desolate - it's too deep for traditional fish to survive because of the pressure - there is life. Ravenous little shrimp-like creatures, sea anemones, worms with bristly feet, and sea cucumbers live in this section of the trench called Challenger Deep, said scientists on the Nereus team at Woods Hole.

"Exploring the trenches is a view back in time because they are so isolated from the ocean and circulation," Woods Hole submersible chief Bowen said. "It's inevitable that it's going to reveal something about the biological history of the planet."

Back when Don Walsh, now 80, took the plunge, he and Piccard saw sparkly tiny fish in the dark that glowed like light reflecting off snowflakes. He could hear sea animals

outside. But once the ship landed and caused a dust-up in the fine flat oatmeal-colored bottom, he could see nothing.

"It was like staring into a bowl of milk," said Walsh, who is in Guam with the Cameron expedition.

Cameron won't be alone in trying to follow Walsh. But the next up is likely to be Branson. His company last year bragged that it's been to all seven continents and is going into space, so a \$17 million sub venture is the next logical step. Google founder Schmidt is helping fund a \$40 million effort by California-based DOER Marine to work on a more science-oriented human deep sea sub that is at least two years away. Also said to be in the hunt is Triton Submarines in Florida, a firm with no celebrity connection.

While some people call this "a race to the bottom," DOER Marine's president Liz Taylor said this is far more collegial.

"What we really have is a race against time in terms of what humans are doing to the oceans," Taylor said. Oceans provide most of the world's oxygen.

"Basically it's our planetary life support system at stake," she said, "and we're treating it as a supermarket and sewer at the same time."

Online: James Cameron and National Geographic's Deepsea Challenge site: <http://deepseachallenge.com/>

NOAA's animation of diving into the Mariana Trench: <http://bit.ly/AxD364>

Branson's Virgin Oceanic: <http://www.virginioceanic.com/>

DOER Marine: <http://www.doermarine.com/>

Triton Submarines: <http://tritonsubs.com/>

Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution's Nereus sub: <http://www.whoi.edu/main/nereus>

Follow Seth Borenstein at <http://twitter.com/borenbears>

Briefly

College plans to offers horsemanship classes

Colby Community College plans a horsemanship workshop from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning March 27 at the college farm. The class, taught by Dr. Paige Ayers, will meet through May 1. It's designed for beginners and for experienced riders who want to improve. Cost is \$20; enrollment for those 65 and older will be paid by a Thomas County senior grant. The farm is three miles east of Colby on U.S. 24 and one north. For information, call Penny Cline at 460-5404.

Cemetery decorations need to be gone soon

All Christmas and nonpermanent decorations need to be removed from Beulah Cemetery by 5 p.m. next Friday to allow for spring maintenance. For questions, call caretaker Deb Henry at 462-3188.

Band to play for dance Saturday at City Limits

The Colby country and rock group "The Mama's Boys" will play for a St. Patrick's Day dance and concert at 9 p.m. Saturday at the City Limits Convention Center. A beer and wine tasting will run from 7 to 9 p.m. Tickets for the evening, including light snacks and door prizes, are \$25 each at the Colby Convention and Visitors Bureau or City Limits, or \$15 for either the tasting only (in advance) or the dance (at the door). Proceeds will benefit the Pickin' on the Plains Bluegrass Festival in July. For information, call the Colby Convention and Visitors Bureau at (785) 460-7643.

Prom dresses on rack at Presbyterian Church

It is time again for the annual sale of gently-used prom dresses, from 6 to 8 p.m. through Friday at the First Presbyterian Church in Colby. All dresses are \$20 and all proceeds go to Genesis-Thomas County food bank. For information, call Sue Draper at 460-6332.

Walk Kansas teams need to register Friday

Friday is the registration deadline for Walk Kansas 2012, which runs from Sunday to May 12 for teams of six. Pick up a team-captain packet at the Thomas County Extension office, 350 S. Range, Suite 16, or download materials at [www.thomas.ksu.edu](http://www.thomas.ksu.edu). Registration, \$7 a person, includes program packets and weekly newsletters. T-shirts are available for \$7, more for larger sizes.

College offers class on drawing the figure

A class in drawing a clothed figure will be offered from 10 a.m. to noon on Tuesday and next Thursday in room 502 of Ferguson Hall at Colby Community College. Cost is \$5 per session. Students must bring their own materials and on time. For information, call instructor David Ketchum at (785) 687-2575.

## Lack of jobless claims boosts economy

WASHINGTON (AP) - Fewer people sought U.S. unemployment benefits last week, adding to signs that the job market is strengthening.

And in another reassuring sign for the economy, wholesale inflation remains mild outside of higher gas prices.

Applications for unemployment aid dropped 14,000 to a seasonally adjusted 351,000, the Labor Department said today. That matches a four-year low reached last month. The four-week average, which smooths fluctuations, was unchanged at 355,750.

Applications have leveled off after falling for six months. The figure has declined 14 percent since October.

When applications drop consistently below 375,000, it usually signals that hiring is strong enough to lower the unemployment rate.

The steady decline in applications has coincided with the best three months of hiring in two years. From December through February, employers added an average of 245,000 jobs a month. The unemployment rate has declined to 8.3 percent, the lowest in three years.

The figures "indicate that the labor market is steadily, if slowly, improving," said Steven Wood, an economist at Insight Economics. "Another month of 200,000-plus payroll employment in March is likely."

A separate Labor report said higher gas costs drove U.S. wholesale prices up last month. But excluding the big jump in gas, inflation was mostly tame.

The Labor Department said in the past 12 months, wholesale prices have increased 3.3 percent. That's the smallest gain since August 2010. Low inflation allows the Federal Reserve to keep short-term interest rates near zero.

## City, county join to upgrade weather monitor

Councilman Dave Voss asked where the trash, mostly plastic bags and black plastic sheets, was coming from, and Armstrong said the businesses in that area such as Walmart. Councilman Mark Beringer said he thinks a lot of it is coming from the Holiday Inn due to their expansion project.

Police Chief Randy Jones said he would have two community service workers out there the next day to begin picking up the area. He said they would have done it earlier, but the wind was

too bad the week before.

- Approved accounts to be charged off and accounts to be sent to the state set-off program. City Finance Director Deb Zerr said that the people who owed the city money had closed the accounts. However, Zerr said, if any of these people want to get utility service again, the system will show that they have an outstanding balance. In order to receive service again, they have to pay the money they owe plus a double deposit.
- Reviewed a preliminary ver-

sion of an "integrated resource plan" for the Western Area Power Administration. A five-year plan is required every five years because Colby gets hydroelectric power from federal projects. Councilman Fred Taylor noted an error that read "small meters" instead of "smart meters." Armstrong was to make that change.

- Awarded a bid for construction on the overflow parking lot at Colby Aquatic Park for Tarbet Ready Mix and Construction Inc. for \$107,468, \$23,665 less than the engineer's estimate.



Saturday Evening												March 17, 2012			
	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30					
KAKE/ABC	Wipeout		20/20				Local								
KBSL/CBS	2012 NCAA Tournament				48 Hours Mystery		Local								
KSNK/NBC	Harry's Law		The Firm		Law & Order: SVU		Local	Saturday Night Live							
KSAS/FOX	iQ/Vival The Chosen				Local		Alcatraz		New Girl	Local					
Cable Channels															
A & E	Parking	Parking	Parking	Parking	Parking	Parking	Parking	Parking	Parking	Parking	Parking				
AMC	Die Hard						Die Hard 2								
ANIM	Must Love Cats		Too Cute!		Too Cute!		Too Cute!		Too Cute!						
BRAVO	Housewives/Atl.		The Game Plan				The Game Plan								
CMT	Road House	Bayou	Redneck Vacation	Bayou	Redneck Vacation	Bayou	Bayou	Bayou							
CNN	CNN Presents	Piers Morgan Tonight	CNN Newsroom	CNN Presents	CNN Newsroom	CNN Presents	Piers Morgan Tonight								
COMEDY	Sunny	Sunny	Sunny	Sunny	The Comedy Central Roast	Tosh.0	Dane Cook: I Solated								
DISC	Last Frontier		Last Frontier		Last Frontier		Last Frontier								
DISN	Shake It	Random	Austin	Jessie	Jessie	Jessie	Jessie	Austin	Shake It	Random					
E!	The Hot Chick				Khloe		The Soup	Chelsea							
ESPN	College Wrestling						SportsCenter		SportsCenter						
ESPN2	Women's C/College B	The Fab Five	College GameDay	SEC Storied	College GameDay		College GameDay								
FAM	Harry Potter	Harry Potter-Phoenix					Coraline								
FOOD	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Iron Chef America	Diners	Diners						
FX	Step Brothers				Role Models		Unsuper.	Unsuper.							
HGTV	Dream	Genevieve	Color	Interiors	House	Hunters	House	Hunters	Color	Interiors					

**American Profile**

*We Celebrate Hometown Life*

Stories from hometowns just like yours. Look for us each week in this paper.

HIST	Swamp People	Swamp People	Swamp People	Swamp People	Swamp People
LIFE	Home Invasion	Abducted	Home Invasion	Home Invasion	Home Invasion
MTV	True Life	Jersey Shore	Jersey Shore	Ridic.	Ridic.
NICK	Victorlue	Rock	Bucket	iCarly	'70s Show
SCI	Leprechaun 3	Leprechaun's Revenge			Leprechaun
SPIKE	The Rock				The Rock
TBS	2012 NCAA Tournament	2012 NCAA Tournament			NCAA Basketball
TCM	Alice Adams		Magnificent		
TLC	Dateline: Real Life	Dateline: Real Life	Dateline: Real Life	Dateline: Real Life	Dateline: Real Life
TNT	NCAA	2012 NCAA Tournament		Leverage	Leverage
TOON	Garfield Gets Real	God/Devil	King/Hill	King/Hill	Fam. Guy
TRAV	Ghost Adventures	Ghost Adventures	Ghost Adventures	Ghost Adventures	Ghost Adventures
TV LAND	Home Imp.	Home Imp.	Raymond	Raymond	Everybody-Raymond
USA	NCIS	NCIS	NCIS	CSI: Crime Scene	CSI: Crime Scene
VH1	Jeepers Creepers	Jersey Shore	Jersey Shore	Stevie TV	Basketball
WGN	NBA Basketball		News/Nine	30 Rock	Scrubs
Premium Channels					
HBO	Green Lantern		Boxing		Luck
MAX	Big Stan		Hall Pass		
SHOW	The Switch		Drive Angry		

**LOCAL TV Listings**

*Sponsored by the*  
**COLBY FREE PRESS**

Sunday Evening												March 18, 2012			
	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30					
KAKE/ABC	Once Upon a Time		Desperate Housewives	GCB			Local								
KBSL/CBS	The Amazing Race		The Good Wife	CSI: Miami			Local								
KSNK/NBC	Harry's Law		Celebrity Apprentice				Local		Dateline NBC						
KSAS/FOX	Simpsons	Burgers	Fam. Guy	Amer. Dad	Local										
Cable Channels															
A & E	Storage	Storage	Storage	Storage	Breakout Kings	Breakout Kings	Storage	Storage							
AMC	The Walking Dead	The Walking Dead	Talk Dead	Comic Book Men	The Walking Dead	Talk Dead									
ANIM	Frozen Planet	Frozen Planet	River Monsters	Frozen Planet	Frozen Planet	Frozen Planet									
BRAVO	Housewives/Atl.	Housewives/Atl.	Shahs of Sunset	Housewives/Atl.											
CMT	Tombstone	Urban Cowboy													
CNN	Ovrhng Hlthcr	Piers Morgan Tonight	CNN Newsroom	Ovrhng Hlthcr	Piers Morgan Tonight										
COMEDY	Jeff Dunham: Spark of Insanity	Jeff Dunham: Controlled Chaos	South Pk	Tosh.0	Key	Ugly Amer									
DISC	Frozen Planet		MythBusters	Frozen Planet											
DISN	Austin	Austin	ANT Farm	Jessie	ANT Farm	ANT Farm	Shake It	Shake It	Wizards	Wizards					
E!	Khloe	Khloe	Khloe	Khloe	Ice-Coco	Fashion Police	Fashion Police	Khloe	Ice-Coco						
ESPN	NBA Basketball		NBA Basketball				SportsCenter		College GameDay						
ESPN2	Wm. Basketball		Baseball Tonight	SportsCenter	College GameDay		SportsCenter		College GameDay						
FAM	Harry P	Harry Potter-Prince					J. Osteen	Ed Young							
FOOD	Cupcake Wars	Worst Cooks	Iron Chef America	Restaurant Stakeout	Worst Cooks										
FX	Superbad		Superbad												
HGTV	Holmes on Homes	Holmes Inspection	Holmes Inspection	Holmes on Homes	Holmes Inspection										
HIST	Ax Men	Ax Men	Full Metal Jousting	Top Shot	Ax Men										
LIFE	Cries in the Dark	Army Wives	Coming Home	Cries in the Dark											
MTV	Woodies	The Challenge	The Chall	Jersey Shore	Jersey Shore	Fantasy	Fantasy								
NICK	'70s Show	'70s Show	My Wife	My Wife	George	George	Friends	Friends	Friends						
SCI	Angels & Demons						The Number 23								
SPIKE	Auction	Auction	Auction	Auction	Auction	Auction	Auction	Auction	Auction	Auction					
TBS	2012 NCAA Tournament	2012 NCAA Tournament					NCAA Bash	Mission 3							
TCM	Born Free		Ring of Bright Water				Presenting Lily Mars								
TLC	Frozen Planet	Frozen Planet	Addiction	Addiction	Addiction	Addiction	Addiction	Addiction	Addiction	Addiction					
TNT	NCAA	2012 NCAA Tournament		Falling Skies	Fast & Furious										
TOON	Speak Up	Level Up	King/Hill	Birdman	Chicken	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Robot Chicken							
TRAV	Extreme RV's	Extreme RV's	Extreme RV's	Extreme RV's	Radical Rides	Extreme RV's									
TV LAND	M*A*S*H	M*A*S*H	Raymond	Raymond	Everybody-Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	King	King						
USA	Law & Order: SVU	Law & Order: SVU	Law & Order: SVU	Law & Order: SVU	The Break-Up										
VH1	Mob Wives	Consign	Mob Wives	Mob Wives	Stevie TV	Mob Wives									
WGN	How I Met	How I Met	How I Met	How I Met	News/Nine	Replay	The Unit		Monk						
Premium Channels															
HBO	Green Lantern		Luck	Eastbound	Too Short	Luck		Eastbound	Too Short						
MAX	X Men	Hall Pass		Man on Fire					Co-Ed						
SHOW	Californ.	Lies	Shameless	Lies	Californ.	Shameless	Lies	Californ.							