

# Teacher calls Redford, world's oceans home

By IRIS SANDERSON JONES  
When she was a very small girl, Darlene Poeceta of Redford planned regular trips across the field from her house to the creek. Every trip was well-planned and had a goal—collecting bugs or counting fish—and she regularly expanded her horizons.

Nothing has changed much, although Ms. Poeceta has been a teacher for several years in the Redford schools. Nowadays, she snorkels and scuba dives the oceans of the world, photographing sharks in the Cayman Islands and staring into the blue-blue eyes of a scallop off the Florida coast.

"I learned a long time ago that if you keep expanding your horizons life will always be an adventure," she said. "I discovered the ocean in Florida when I was twelve and I've been expanding my horizons ever since."

During the last 10 years, Ms. Poeceta has snorkeled the waters of Europe, Ethiopia, Kenya, South America, Japan, Fiji, Russia, Romania, the Galapagos Islands, or as she put it, "Anyplace where there's water."

When she got used to snorkeling, she expanded to deep-sea diving and then to underwater photography. Her newest adventure is running river rapids.

"SNORKELING GIVES me freedom," Ms. Poeceta said. "You snorkel on the surface with a mask and

a tube, which is quite different from diving with a tank, but most of the seas' wildlife is in the first 35 feet of water anyway. If it's clear, you can see an entire world.

"Every place has its own underwater coral and its own landscape."

She first explored the deeper ocean when she went deep sea fishing off the coast of Venezuela, where she spent more time being seasick than fishing. The idea of tackling deep-sea diving was firmly planted by then, however, so she now dives in all the exotic seas of the world.

"I always wondered what I would do if I saw a shark," she said. "One day in the Cayman Islands, I was the first diver off the boat. I had taken up underwater photography by then, so I had a camera in a watertight bag.

"A shark came straight towards me. All I could think of was taking his picture, so I started swimming towards him when it occurred to me that he might not be friendly. I got back on that boat fast.

"The problem is that nobody really knows what sharks will do. In an overwhelming number of cases, they do nothing, but you can't be sure. I have learned since then that a man-of-war or a sea urchin can be far more of a problem."

There is a fine line between adventure and danger for a traveler like Dar-

lene, who likes to move on to new adventures but doesn't have any urge to scale the Himalayas, or put herself in life-and-death situations.

"Travel is fun," she said. "Wherever I go I try new things and keep on doing old ones. My interest in wildlife hasn't changed since I did those field trips as a small child.

"I explore it and photograph it whenever I find it. There is nothing quite like the experience of staring at a scallop in the waters of Florida, and discovering that it has blue eyes."

Shades of Paul Newman.



Darlene Poeceta takes control of the wheel off the Florida coast. At left, she prepares to take a dive.

# TRAVEL LOG of Iris Jones



## Memories—best souvenirs

Everybody has a different definition of adventure. I like to capture wild memories of people being very human in faraway places. One of my best trophies is a mind-picture of a group of boys gathered high in the Himalayan mountains in Nepal singing "Santa Claus is Coming to Town."

The outing was designed as a one-day sample of a trekking and camping expedition. It had rained for eight hours, so the campsite was up my calves in mud.

The still-green slopes of 9,000-foot Mt. Pulchoki loomed above us, and a distant view showed that misty quality we associate with oriental pictures: mist deep down valleys filled with high, narrow trees.

As I slogged down the muddy hill from the road, I saw a field below and a spread of red and yellow pup tents on the slope beyond. The field held a dining tent, a group of local country musicians, a ring of local villagers and a large group of boys from the Catholic school on the hill.

Father Martin Coyne of Chicago and Brother Karpinski of Detroit had led them down the hill to meet a group of Americans. All but two of the boys were Hindu, although they wore typical western dress.

The boys gathered around us to ask questions in their well-learned English.

"You should stay until tomorrow," one boy said. "Tomorrow we have a festival on this field. We're going to sing songs from every country in the world."

"Do you want to hear our American song?" asked another voice from the back of the group?"

I nodded yes.

"It's 'You better watch out, you better not cry' . . . you know?" Without thinking, I began to softly sing "You better watch out you better not cry. . . . Immediately, the whole group joined me.

You may have a stuffed dolphin, a tiger rug or some other souvenir of adventure, but I have a wild memory in my mind of that moment.

There I was 8,000 feet up in the Himalayan mountains of Nepal, with 200 Nepalese school boys gathered around me on the edge of a high mountain field, all of us singing at the top of our lungs: "SANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO TOWN!"

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WORK ABROAD, a program of the Council on International Education Exchange, also offers information on foreign travel for American programs sponsored by CIEE.

Write to CIEE, Department PR-WA, 777 United Nations Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10017. Programs include France, Ireland, Great Britain and New Zealand, with jobs ranging from chambermaid to factory worker.

## Guide offers more than the usual

Most travelers feel adventurous enough camping through Yellowstone Park or exploring European flea mar-

kets, but some only feel alive when they are soaring high above the earth or taking a wildlife safari.

The American Adventurers Association, which is headquartered in Seattle, is a kind of central information bureau for travelers of the United States and Canada.

The association publishes Adventure Travel, a magazine of fascinating adventure trips six times a year. It also publishes an International Adventure Travel Guide with its contents page divided into air, land, water and underwater adventures. Members also receive a monthly newsletter.

Leo LeBon, founder of Mountain Travel, is quoted in the January newsletter as saying, "Usually what is really fascinating and interesting to us is not going to sell because we are pioneering something that hasn't reached the public's imagination yet."

"If I were to propose a Patagonia icecap crossing, you'd probably ask 'Where's that?' It wouldn't titillate you because it's not a very well-known place."



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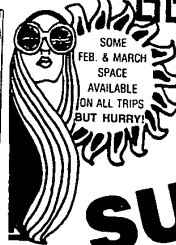
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