

Keystone Students Have “Passport to Antarctica”

Keystone students recently had the extraordinary opportunity to learn all about Antarctica and Weddell Seals from Alex Eilers, Manager of Education at The Pink Palace Museum. Ms. Eilers has been selected to be a 2011-2012 Polar TREC teacher and will be spending six weeks in Antarctica, beginning in January.

All of the Keystone students, from Pre-K to Grade Five, were spellbound by the presentations. The older students were amazed to learn that Antarctica gets less than eight inches of snow per year! Students also had the chance to learn about Weddell Seals, which were unfamiliar to most students and teachers. The students were especially interested to learn that these seals can hold their breaths for up to 80 minutes and that they can weigh up to 900 pounds!

The biggest hit with all the students was the extreme cold weather gear that Ms. Eilers brought along to show them. She told the students that she will have to wear three different layers of clothing on her trip: one layer to stay dry, one layer for warmth, and one layer to protect against the wind. She will have to wear boots that weigh three pounds each, which she brought along to show the students.

The Keystone students and teachers all enjoyed this fantastic learning experience, thanks to Keystone Teacher Dr. Kathy Cooper. The students are already making plans to follow Ms. Eilers's trip via her blog, and the Keystone teachers will also be incorporating it into their lessons. Keystone is ready to travel to Antarctica through the eyes of Ms. Eilers!