

# Program offers Malaysian butterflies and Chilean mummies

By ELLEN THORNTON  
Staff Writer

It sounds like a diabolical plan set up by Carolina Fever to rid the world of N.C. State fans. However, as much as we would all like this, Operation Raleigh is actually a pet project of Prince Charles which is devoted to scientific research and service.

Operation Raleigh is a multi-national program, offering youth between the ages of 17 and 24 the chance to participate in expeditions in more than 40 countries. The projects, which last three months, range from studying butterfly species in Malaysia to excavating mummies in Chile's Atacama Desert to observing Pakistan's snow leopard population. Other participants, or venturers, carve trails in national parks, build look-out towers over glaciers or assist scientists in their research.

"The purpose of Operation Raleigh is to bring youth together to create better leaders for the future," said Lisa Long, assistant director of the program. "There are lots of

young people that don't know what direction their lives are going in, and there is lots of needy work to be done, so Prince Charles decided to put them together."

Operation Raleigh was designed so its project locations would cover the globe in four years.

The program is in its last year, so interested people should apply by the end of May, Long said. To be considered for participation in a project, a person must be able to swim 500 yards and speak English. The staff reviews the applications, and finalists are invited to attend a selection weekend.

Selection weekends are held throughout the year in California, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, North Carolina and Texas. During this time, staff members evaluate applicants as they participate in simulated expeditions. They look for people who are compatible, eager

for adventure and committed to service.

Once selected, venturers are allowed to choose one of three expeditions based on their skills and time commitments. Summer positions are still open for expeditions to Kenya, the United Kingdom, the Rocky Mountains and Brazil. Next year the program will have expeditions to the Appalachian wilderness, the Bahamas and Cameroon.

After selecting a place to go, venturers must raise \$5,500 in sponsorship to pay for their trip. Lawrence Frank, a junior biology and English major from Durham, is participating in a bike-a-hon to raise his money. Whitney Warren, a senior from Newbern, and Frank plan to get sponsors for a 100-mile trek along the Outer Banks in May.

Frank will be going on the Zebu, a 72-foot sailing ship that brings supplies to and acts as back-up for

other expeditions. The Zebu will have traveled around the earth by the end of Operation Raleigh, and Frank will sail on the last leg of its journey.

The Zebu expedition is the only one that is not land-based. Instead, it concentrates on sail training. Joining Frank will be two other Americans and 13 venturers from other countries. They will join the ship off the coast of Portugal, visiting other expedition sites on the way back to England.

"I enjoy something adventurous while I'm not in school, and I wanted to go to another country," Frank said. "Operation Raleigh stresses working together and exchanging ideas between different cultures. This is a great way to be with people of other nationalities."

According to Prince Charles, "the theme of Operation Raleigh is science and service. . . . As well as

making some practical contribution to a better world, they (venturers) may grow to respect each other's cultures and attitudes and thus help to break some of the barriers of prejudice and intolerance which have always existed, but which seem to be even more obvious in today's world."

After returning from the three-month expedition, venturers are required to complete between 150 and 300 hours of community service in their home or college town. The purpose of this service is to apply

the experience the venturers have gained and to give something back to the community. Examples of community service include volunteering in an emergency room, tutoring young people and teaching underprivileged kids to sail.

For an application or additional information, contact Operation Raleigh, 109 East Jones Street, Raleigh, 27611, or call (919) 733-9366.

Operation Raleigh has a lot to offer, even if Prince Charles won't help us get rid of N.C. State.

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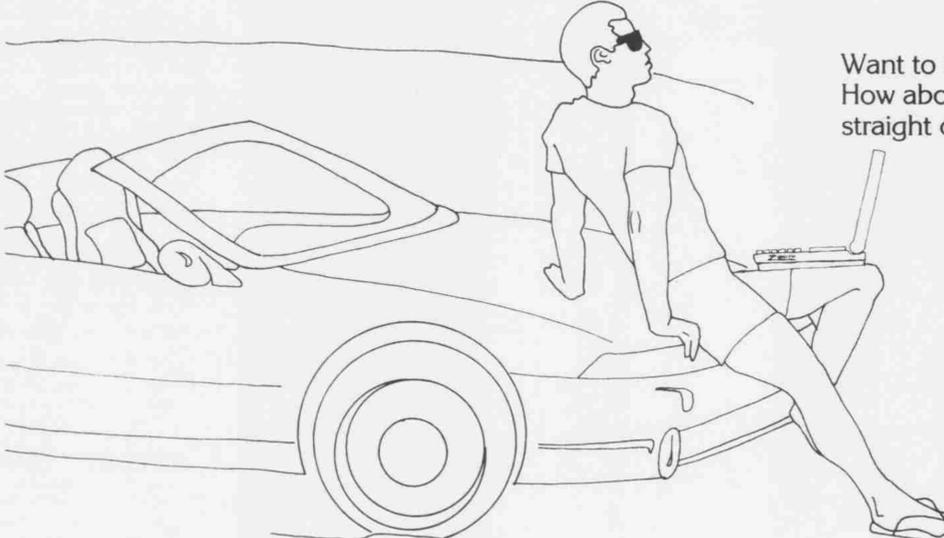
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