

University's president doubles as thrill-seeking polar explorer

DALLAS (AP) — Robert Rutford, the low-key president of the University of Texas at Dallas, doesn't come across as a risk taker. Bright, businesslike and reserved, yes, but not a thrill-seeker.

But beneath Rutford's staid exterior is the soul of a polar explorer.

Rutford, 55, is an adventurer of the first order. He spent a year in arduous Greenland — and ended it. He's been north of the Arctic Circle seven times. And he's been to Antarctica 10 times, to study the frozen continent's geology and revel in its stark beauty.

"It is a very beautiful place, but not very forgiving," Rutford said at his office. "You don't want to make many mistakes."

The trips began in 1959, when getting to Antarctica from the United States was often a weeks-long undertaking. Only a handful of scientists had the mettle to brave the constant light of an Antarctic summer — when the temperature can dip to 40 degrees below zero Fahrenheit — let alone the unrelenting darkness of winter. But Rutford went eagerly, sensing the opportunity such a place offered a young geologist.

"At the time I got involved in Antarctic research, there was practically nothing known, so anything you did was a major contribution to knowledge," Rutford said. "It was a combi-

nation of science and exploration that was unique."

Rutford opened a map of the Antarctic on his desk and pointed to where he had done some of his research: The Ellsworth Mountains, rising more than 17,000 feet; the Ross Ice Shelf, beneath which Rutledge and some of his colleagues were astounded to find life, in the form of tiny, shrimplike creatures; the South Pole, first reached by Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen in 1911.

He lived for months in huts with wooden floors and walls made of fiberglass-insulated canvas. It was light all the time, and, characteristically, Rutford wanted to work all the time.

"The difficult thing to remember is that your body can't keep up with the sun," Rutford said. "You can't work 24 hours a day. You have to structure your time — otherwise you'd go and go and go until you dropped."

Although he has not been to the Antarctic since 1984, Rutford keeps abreast of scientific developments there and is helping the State Department draft a 16-nation treaty governing any future use of the continent's resources.

Rutford and other scientists suspect major oil and natural gas reserves lie beneath the thick ice, and they want to make sure any drilling is strictly regulated, to protect the nearly pristine environment.

"It will give a little bit," Rutford said. "Nobody really knows how much it will give."

His concern is understandable. For Rutford, Antarctica is a place of wonder and innumerable mysteries. Take the discovery of fossilized glossopteris, a fernlike plant native to tropical or semitropical climates: Does this suggest that Antarctica underwent a striking climatic change, or did the land mass move? Such questions intrigue Rutford, and he would like to help answer them.

Rutford credits his father and grandfather for his appreciation of the outdoors. As a teenager in northern Minnesota, he eschewed skiing, instead snowshoeing so he could get deeper into the woods, farther from the beaten path. "That," Rutford said, "was before snowmobiles ruined everything."

A graduate of the University of Minnesota, Rutford held teaching and administrative posts at Hamline University in St. Paul, Minn., and the universities of South Dakota and Nebraska before coming to UTD in 1982. Although it might seem an odd place for a cold-weather adventurer to land, the science- and business-oriented institution suits Rutford perfectly, he says. He is able to do research and still lead a respected, albeit small, institution.

Bob Lovitt, UTD's vice president for business affairs, believes Rutford relishes his Antarctic forays in part

to relieve the pressures of his job and in part for the sheer challenge.

"Bob is a very competitive individual," Lovitt said. "I think he sees a big challenge that very few people get the opportunity to take on and very few people have mastered. It gives him a different kind of pressure from what he gets at the university."

Rutford's quixotic traits seem to have been passed along to at least one of his three children — 28-year-old Kris, an accountant in Lincoln, Neb., who swam the 21-mile English Channel on Aug. 5.

Rutford was in the boat that trailed his son in the swim from Dover to the small French town of Wissam in 10 hours, 44 minutes. "I really wanted him to be there," Kris Rutford said by telephone from Lincoln. "A lot of times they discourage you from having family on the boat because they might be overprotective, but I wasn't worried about him. I do think he was a little bit nervous."

Robert Rutford recorded the event on film, as would any father. On his office wall is a map of his son's course.

"During the whole swim, I don't think he said 15 words," Rutford said admiringly of his son. "He was in great physical shape, but he was also mentally ready. The thing that impresses me is the mental part of it."

Officials discover cocaine in trailer

HIDALGO (AP) — More than a ton of cocaine was found concealed in the roof of a truck trailer, said officials who Tuesday were looking for the driver after he slipped away from a U.S. Customs inspection lot.

The 2,735 pounds of cocaine, with an estimated street value of \$500 million, was found Monday evening at the Hidalgo port of entry concealed in the roof of the rig's box trailer, officials said.

A sniffer dog aided in the seizure, said Billy McFarland, chief Customs inspector at Hidalgo, a border city in the Rio Grande Valley across the Rio Grande from Reynosa, Tamaulipas, Mexico.

"The inspector didn't like the looks of the trailer, he brought the dog over and he (the dog) alerted us to the presence of drugs," McFarland said.

Customs inspectors then drilled into the top of the trailer and found the cocaine in five-

inch-deep hidden compartments stretching the trailer's entire 45-foot length and 10-foot width.

"We had to peel the entire top of the trailer off," McFarland said.

To the naked eye, he said, the trailer appeared to be empty.

Customs officials said it was the second largest land seizure of cocaine at a U.S. port of entry on the Mexican border, surpassed only by the seizure last September of 3,589 pounds of cocaine at El Paso.

While stacked up awaiting transfer to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, the 2,735 pounds of cocaine occupied the space of a medium-size automobile, McFarland said.

The driver, however, walked away from the scene undetected, he added, and officials Tuesday were working to determine the ownership of the vehicle.

An arrest was expected, McFarland said.

Treasury rejects tints for currency design

Pink greenbacks made lots of people see red. So the Treasury rejected fancy tints and other radical changes in the nation's currency and settled on a couple of minor changes to thwart counterfeiters.

New greenbacks will sport a security thread that has the denomination embedded in it and the letters USA running vertically through it.

The words "United States of America" will be printed around the portrait, although you'll need a 7-power magnifying glass to read them.

You should see the new bills in the next couple of years.

Existing currency won't be recalled.

Coins may also be in for a face-lift of sorts.

The mint will redesign the back sides of all coins over the next six years if legislation before Congress passes next year as expected.

The presidential lineup — Lincoln, Washington, Jefferson, Roosevelt and Kennedy — won't change.

The redesign is being touted by sponsors as a way to heighten interest among collectors and raise \$255 million.

— The Great American Car Sale:

You may see automakers monkeying with incentive programs or scaling them back, but they won't go away, auto analysts say. For one thing, you've come to expect rebates and cut-rate financing. For another, car makers will need to offer inducements to buyers over the next few years as a flood of subcompacts hits the market from U.S.-based factories of foreign companies and such new exporters as Taiwan, Brazil and Malaysia. And the competition will spread upward to larger, more expensive cars. Even Japanese firms may have to start using rebates or low-interest loans, which so far they have tried to avoid.

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Any student wishing to withhold any or all of this information should fill out, in person, the appropriate form, available to all students at the Registrar's Office, Room 112, Records Section, no later than 5:00 p.m., Friday September 16, 1988

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