CL educator to teach from Antarctica

By KAREN LONG - klong@nwherald.com

CRISTAL LAKE – Betty Trummel will teach local students this fall despite being thousands of miles from her Crystal Lake classroom.

The fourth-grade teacher at Husmann Elementary School leaves Saturday for Antarctica. With the help of a Web site, www.andrill.org/iceberg, students and their parents can follow her blog, send her e-mail, read about the scientists on the trip and learn more about the world’s coldest, driest and windiest location, she said.

"I really want to promote science as a career, especially for women," said Trummel, of Lakewood.

The Antarctic Drilling expedition, or ANDRILL, will recover stratigraphic records, or cylinders of sediment that hold climate information, said Trummel, who traveled to Antarctica eight years ago with the Cape Roberts Project. Machinery specially designed for the ANDRILL program will drill through ice as thick as two football fields, then more than half a mile below the sea floor, she said.

"It's lots of different types of geology work," she told students Wednesday at Canterbury Elementary School in Crystal Lake.

Trummel and educators from America, New Zealand, Italy and Germany are part of the ANDRILL Research Immersion for Science Educators program.

Trummel quizzed Canterbury students about the differences between the Arctic and Antarctic. They said she would see penguins in the Antarctic but not polar bears, which live in the Arctic.

The scientists and teachers can’t help sick animals because the team is not there to disturb or affect the environment.

"It's nature taking its course," Trummel said. "Animals do get injured and disoriented. We just have to let them be."

She explained how she and the scientists would have 24 hours of sunlight and be 18 hours ahead of Chicago time. They will have TVs and computers, live in dormitories and eat meals in a cafeteria.

They will wear several layers of clothing, which fifth-grader Caitlin Henderson found out first hand. She volunteered to model the layers of long underwear, fleece jacket and pants, snowsuit, boots, hood, neck gaiter, hat and gloves.

While the U.S. Antarctic Program said temperatures could reach 50 degrees in summer, the temperature was forecast at just below 0 degrees this week, according to Weather Underground, a commercial weather service.

"You need to wear layers because you're trapping your body heat," Trummel said.

Sarah Jenkins, a 10-year-old fifth-grader at Canterbury, said she enjoyed Trummel’s presentation.

"It was interesting," she said. "The clothes were funny."

To follow Betty Trummel’s Antarctic adventure or send her e-mails, visit www.andrill.org/iceberg.