

Miriam Sutton

I traveled to San Francisco, California in December 2008 for a presentation at the American Geophysical Union annual meeting. This was my second visit to the AGU Meeting at the city by the bay and my first presentation in a Poster Session. My two goals for this trip were: 1 – Share successful Adventure Learning strategies with conference attendees in a way that encourages educators and researchers to merge their two worlds through the classroom; and 2 – Experience the unique personality of San Francisco.

I traveled west with some anxiety about my presentation. I have presented various topics at regional and national conferences in the past but always presented my material using an oral presentation format. I wasn't quite sure how to prepare my material for a poster session, nor was I sure what to expect from the conference attendees who would visit my poster. After several designs, I finally settled on a poster layout that I thought would best communicate the ideas and information I wanted to relay at the AGU Meeting. (I've included a copy of my poster with this summary.) I talked with colleagues who had previously completed poster sessions and took their advice and suggestions with me to the conference. Based on their input, I thought I would spend a lonely afternoon with my poster.

On the contrary, the afternoon was filled with inquires and engaging conversations from teachers, graduate students, and researchers. I made new contacts that are already providing me with more adventure learning opportunities for my classroom and I found the poster session to be as intrinsically rewarding as my previous oral session. My first goal for the conference was successfully completed. Now it was time to focus on my second goal.

I reconnected with a few old friends during the conference and we reviewed our "goings" and "doings" over nightly dinners in different parts of the city. I received the following text message from a friend as I was leaving my session: "dinner...Irish coffee on a Christmas caroling trolley ride... you in?" With Goal #2 fresh on my mind, I replied, "yes." I joined my friends, and locals, on the annual Buena Vista Irish Pub Christmas Caroling Trolley Ride. We rode the reserved and decorated trolley along the streets of San Francisco, aglow with the lights of the season, and shared our joy and singing with residents and visitors cheering us from the sidewalks.

In closing, I would like to thank C-MORE for providing me with financial assistance for my participation in the AGU Meeting. My experiences aboard the R/V Kilo Moana were featured during the Field-based Research and Remote Teaching strategies of my poster presentation and were also featured during my oral presentation at an Ocean Awareness Day workshop I conducted in my school district last week. I have also submitted an Adventure Learning abstract to the National Marine Educators Association conference being held this summer in Monterey, California as well.