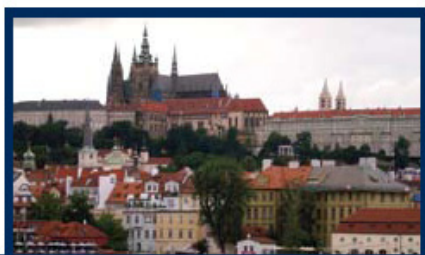


Hot Mill electrician returns from Earthwatch Expedition



The royal palace and St. Vitus' cathedral viewed from across the Vltava River

After a day of collecting water samples and measuring trees, Dan Frank climbed atop a summit in the Jizera Mountains for a bird's eye view of the effects of pollution in the Czech Republic.

He saw a panorama filled with hundreds of dead trees – stripped, silent sentries standing against odds. They served as a testament to the consequences of poor environmental practices.

“It stretched out forever,” said Frank, an electrician in Warrick’s Hot Mill. “We were right next to the Polish and German borders, and from the top of the mountain, you could see a lot of the damage that was done to the trees. There were dead ash trees all over the place.”

Frank was one of just 15 employees selected from Alcoa locations worldwide to help improve the environment by participating in one of several Earthwatch Institute Expeditions. He was assigned to study the mountain waters of the Czech Republic’s Jizera Mountains from May 31 to June 13.

Alcoa paid for his travel expenses – he simply used his vacation time for the trip. Another Alcoa employee, Charlie Soord, an ABS consultant for the Mining Group in Western Australia, was on the same expedition with Frank.

Together, they assisted Dr. Joseph Krecek, a noted environmentalist, in collecting soil and water samples, measuring trees, counting fish.

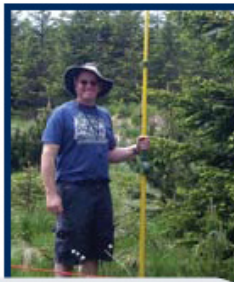
“For me, this was a real opportunity because it will also fulfill an internship requirement for my studies at the University of Evansville,”

he said. Alcoa, he said, has provided tuition assistance through the Tuition Reimbursement Program.

“So I’ve really gotten a double bonus out of this. As much as we sometimes complain about Alcoa, there is a whole lot going for it, and they are very generous in their programs – such as tuition aid and Earthwatch.

“I would encourage anybody to take advantage of the programs Alcoa is offering its employees,” said Frank, who hopes to soon earn a degree in environmental science from the University of Evansville.

Frank was impressed with the work of Krecek, the principal investigator on the Earthwatch Expedition. When the Eastern Bloc collapsed in 1989, more than two-thirds of the



Dan Frank, an electrician in the Hot Mill, measuring trees during the Earthwatch Expedition to the Czech Republic, where Frank helped study the effects of pollution on the Jizera Mountains.

forested headwaters were damaged. Trees were dying and water quality would not support life. Now, the conditions are improving. Much credit is given to Krecek and his work, which helped establish management plans for the mountain watersheds and lakes.

The damage to the area was blamed on a lack of environmental stewardship from coal-fired power plants. Now, some of those plants have closed and those that remain have made improvements by installing scrubbers.

Since power plants and industry were a topic of discussion, Frank said he shared with his fellow Earthwatch participants the investment that Alcoa has made in the environment at Warrick Operations.

Before he left on the trip, one of the four

units at Warrick’s Power Plant went online with scrubber technology, an investment of more than \$500 million. Workers are now in the process of connecting another unit; and all four are expected to be online with scrubbers before year’s end.

“I made a point of talking about it,” he said. “I live just over the hill from the plant, so these changes will affect me. Those scrubbers are just a miraculous thing. It makes us viable for decades to come, and it represents a huge investment by Alcoa.”

The trip broadened Frank’s interest in culture. On his own expense, he visited Prague before the expedition began.

“I went to the opera,” he noted, as if surprised to hear his own voice utter that sentence. “Back at home, I would have never gone to the opera. But it was just beautiful; the performance was fantastic.”

He was also impressed with the architecture and the beauty of the country.

“It was like a Disneyland - Fantasyland that went on and on forever,” he said. “They’ve got art all over the place, beautiful architecture. You might say that it is a very well decorated country.

“It was just a real experience – one I would never have had the opportunity to experience without this program.”



Charlie Soord, an Alcoa Business System and learning consultant for the Alcoa Mining Group located in Western Australia, was one of eight people who assisted during the Earthwatch Expedition to the Czech Republic. Soord was joined on the trip with Alcoa Warrick Operations employee Dan Frank, an electrician in the Hot Mill.