

**TOMORROW'S LIFESTYLE**  
Third-generation grower maintains family business.

# TEACHERS ON 'VACATION'

## Rye educator uses human power to circle the globe

By JAMES AMOS  
The Pueblo Chieftain

Rye Elementary teacher April Abril may have already won the teachers' version of a What-I-Did-For-Summer-Vacation contest.

The fifth-grade teacher is departing soon for Australia, where she will join a group completing a leg of an ongoing expedition to travel around the world by human power.

This summer's leg is a three-month bicycle trip across a large chunk of Australia, starting from the northeast coast and looping around Ayres Rock in the interior before turning northwest to the coast at Darwin.

This is Abril's second summer taking part in the project called Expedition 360.

Last summer she helped project leader Jason Lewis pedal a small boat across 1,200 miles of the South Pacific from the Solomon Islands to the Australian Coast.

Lewis started the expedition in 1994 with a friend, leaving England and pedaling, skating and bicycling across whatever land and sea lay before them. Lewis, alone by the fall of 1995, ended up in Pueblo after a car hit him while he was in-line skating and broke both his legs.

While he recovered, Lewis went to area schools to tell them about his trip and met Abril in Rye, where he was staying.

Abril said her classes have followed Lewis' progress ever since, as have classrooms of children around the globe.

The peddling trip across the ocean last year took a month and untold amounts of energy, Abril said. The small boat faced currents and winds that ran the wrong way, requiring either Lewis or Abril to pedal constantly, even while the other one slept,

just to keep from being washed back.

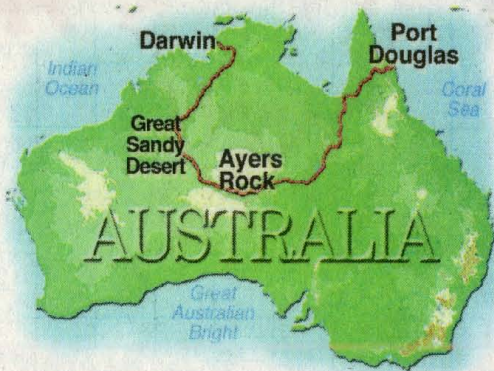
As it was, the pair were blown 170 miles off course and had to be helped through a gap in the Great Barrier Reef because of the treacherous conditions.

Abril wrote that when she reached dry land, she couldn't walk without

falling because of being on the ocean for so long.

This year's trip will include several students of various ages and another two adults. The trip will take the group through the rainforest, the

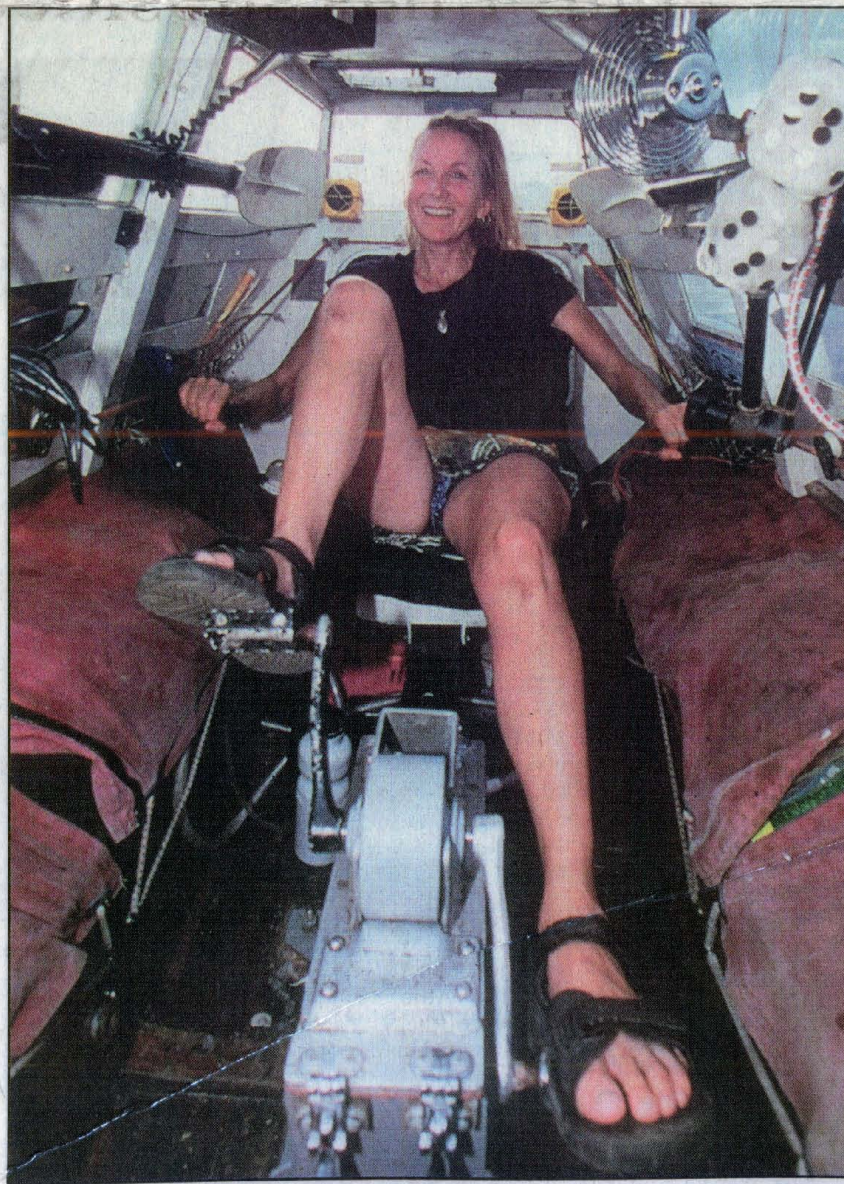
Please see Abril, Page 6A



The Australian route to be taken by Rye teacher April Abril and others this summer.



School teacher April Abril cooks a meal in the tiny pedal-it-yourself boat she shared with Jason Lewis last summer.



School teacher April Abril takes a turn at the pedals aboard 'Moksha' last summer.

Rye teacher April Abril's pedal boat, 'Moksha,' climbs a wave in the South Pacific in the summer of 2000.

Courtesy photos

## Some teachers go to school on summer 'break'

School is never far away for a teacher — even in the summer.

Teachers in Colorado must be certified for their teaching license each six years, according to Cheryl DeLong, director of instruction at School District 70.

To do that, teachers must earn at least six hours of academic credit, something they can do by taking classes at a college, university or other educational enterprise that qualifies for academic credit.

The ongoing schooling is required so teachers can stay abreast of changes in their fields and education in general and continue improving their skills, DeLong said.

School districts also pay more to teachers with more academic credits, so teachers also have that incentive to keep learning.

Many teachers also pursue master's degrees during the summer, DeLong said, again to earn more money and also to learn more about their specialty.

DeLong said many teachers coming out of college with their bachelor's degrees are generalists. Later, they may decide they need to know more in some area they've started to teach, such as mathematics, and pursue a master's degree in that.

"It gives them a different level of expertise," DeLong said.

Aside from college and university classes, teachers can take short-course classes during the summer, offered by local school districts, colleges and other organizations.

The classes, typically a day or two long, provide a half or one credit hour and instruct teachers about teaching to state standards, recognizing how different children learn and other educational topics.

District 70 offers its own teachers a free summer academy of short courses and to other districts' teachers for a small fee.

DeLong said some of the classes are required for new teachers working in District 70, while others are optional, aimed at help-

Please see Teachers, Page 6A