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Written at WAIS Divide

We are now in the productive but tiring part of the field season. We are consistently drilling and processing 30+ m of core per day, and have reached a depth of 1,000 m. Our Lead Driller, Jay Johnson, continues to refine the drilling equipment, occasionally making adjustments of only 0.002 of an inch to critical components. The core quality has deteriorated as we move into the center of the brittle ice. There are typically several long fractures per meter, but the netting is holding the cores together. The current ice is much clearer and has smaller bubbles then 100 m above. It will not be possible to use a melter to sample this ice, but there is plenty of high quality ice for measurements that use discreet samples. The electrical measurements are identifying well-defined annual layers. We are still on track to meet our goal of getting out of the brittle ice this season, but we don't have any extra days and rarely take a day off.

We completed two planned personnel changes. Bruce Vaughn has replaced Anais Orsi as Operations Manager. Brian Bencivengo has replaced Geoff Hargreaves as the Core Curator. Julie Palais was on site for several days. It was great to be able to show off the progress we have made.

A LC-130 and crew spent the night at WAIS Divide due to deteriorating weather. We feed them well, explained why we are here, and gave them a tour of the coring and processing facility. Our Danish Ph.D. candidate Susanne Lilja Buchardt gave a nice evening talk on the NGRIP ice core. This was of special interest because there will be many comparisons made between the Greenland and WAIS Divide climate records. He had a great New Years dinner and Anais organized the well-attended second "WAIS Divide Olympics" which included golf, snow block tower building, man hauling sleds, and other events.

We are making preparations for next season. It will be particularly busy because we will be packing the ~900 m of brittle ice we are drilling this year, and will also hopefully recover and pack an additional ~1,400 m of ice. I will be leaving on the next flight, and Bruce will be taking over as the Camp Chief Scientist.