



ZENITH



2013

Department of Geography



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A Letter From The Head of the Department

Dear alumni and friends of Geography,

We have completed another year and another *Zenith* is out the door. We work very hard to assemble this magazine but have fun doing so. It is a good opportunity to reflect on all that we have accomplished over the past year. It is also an ideal forum for sharing news and staying in touch with our many friends and alumni who have found a home in OSU Geography over the decades.

While many accomplishments are reflected in the pages of this magazine, a few special accolades really stand out. Two of our own were recently honored with nominations for 2013 Graduate and Professional Student Government Association (GPSGA) awards. Mike Larson was nominated for the GPSGA Outstanding Graduate Support Staff Award, making this the second time in as many years that he has been recognized with a major campus staff award nomination. Jon Comer beat the competition to win the GPSGA Outstanding Graduate Coordinator Award. Jon is the only one I know of who has earned campus awards for both outstanding undergraduate and graduate advising. Tom Wikle has begun a two-year term as the 34th President of Gamma Theta Upsilon (GTU), the international geographic honor society that maintains chapters on more than 290 college and university campuses in the U.S. and abroad. Matt Miller, a Visiting Assistant Professor with our department for the past two years, left OSU for home in Vermont, and Jianjun Ge left OSU for a position in industry before the start of the semester. However, we were very excited that the promotion of Jacqueline Vadjunec to Associate Professor with tenure was approved by the Board of Regents, and Amy Frazier joined our Geography family as a new Assistant Professor in August of this year.

We are very pleased with the quality of our students and especially proud of those who were recognized with honors or competitive awards over the past year. Geography senior Andrew Potter received a \$1,500 scholarship in the South Central Arc User Group regional competition at the SCAUG meeting in Addison, Texas. Geography graduate students Siewe Siewe and Matt Haffner were finalists in the OSU Graduate College's Three Minute Thesis Competition which challenges students to present a compelling oration on their research and its significance to a non-specialist audience. Geography major Emily Ellis spent the school year working on a research project in Geography as part of the OSU Freshman Research Scholars Program and presented results of her project at the OSU Freshman Research Scholars Symposium in March.

Enjoy your new *Zenith*. We hope to hear from you before the next edition and we look forward to seeing some of you over the next year when your travels bring you back to Oklahoma State.

All the best,



Dale Lightfoot
Professor and Head

Blast From the Past



OSUAIR field trip, 1972 or 1973 (left to right): faculty Rich Watson, Jerry Croft, Dick Hecock, Keith Harries, graduate students John Herning and Paul Bolstad



Chi Chapter--Gamma Theta Upsilon 1987 (left to right):
Bottom row: Dr. Steve Stadler, Richard Hackett, Michael Simone, Dianne Enright, David Waits
Top row: Jeff Adair, Brad Bays, Judy Musselman, Michael Conner, Bud Kopp



Awards and Scholarships

Geography Scholarship Priorities 2013-2014

Enhance Existing Geography Scholarships for Outstanding Students: The four awards are

- (1) Robert and Lucy Fite Award for Outstanding First Year Ph.D. student
- (2) Robert Norris Award for Outstanding First Year M.S. student
- (3) John F. Rooney, Jr. Award for Outstanding Junior
- (4) Alyson L. Greiner Undergraduate Travel Scholarship

Finish Endowing the Jerry Croft and Family Award in Geography Education: To reach the full endowment so that an annual award can be made to an outstanding Geography undergraduate or graduate student with an expressed interest in geographic education.

Finish Endowing the Stephen W. Tweedie Travel Scholarship: To reach the full endowment needed to sustain annual awards to Geography majors embarking on a significant travel experience.

Geography freshman completes the Freshman Research Scholars Program

Geography major Emily Ellis spent the 2012-2013 school year working on an original research project in Geography as part of the OSU Freshman Research Scholars Program. She was advised by Dale Lightfoot, and Bruce Battles gave his time to technically advise this imagery and GIS-based research project. Emily spent much of the fall and spring semesters searching Google Earth imagery for karez subterranean water systems in northwest Iran and then mapping the location of each chain of associated wells and overlaying each karez with maps of the topography, rainfall, and geology to discern patterns associated with the siting of karez systems in Iran, compared to patterns reported for karez elsewhere in the eastern hemisphere. She presented results of her project, titled "Mapping the Spatial Distribution and Concentration of Karez in Northwestern Iran," as a research poster at the OSU Freshman Research Scholars Symposium in March 2013.

Emily Ellis with her research poster at the 2013 Freshman Research Scholars Symposium



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Awards and Scholarships

2012-13 academic year:

Rooney Scholarship for Outstanding Junior (\$1,000)
Lee T. Johnson

A&S Outstanding Senior
Samantha West

Norris Scholarship for 1st Year Master's Student (\$1,000)
Matthew Haffner

Fite Scholarship for 1st Year Ph.D. Student (\$1,000)
Stephanie Heald

Shaul Medal for Teaching Excellence (\$500)
Daniel Wilson

2013-14 academic year:

Norris Conference Travel Award (\$500 each)
Stephanie Koehn, Junlong Liu

Norris Field Research Award (\$1,500 each)
Robert Garrett, Sean Thomas

Tweedie Travel Scholarship (\$500)
Yun Zhao

Greiner Travel Scholarship (\$500 each)
Alexandria Hubbard, Andrew Potter

New scholarship established in Geography Education

A generous donation from Jerry Croft has established the Jerry Croft and Family Award in Geography Education. This new scholarship opportunity in Geography needs \$5,000 more in the OSU Foundation to be fully endowed so that an annual award can be made to an outstanding Geography undergraduate or graduate student with an expressed interest in geographic education.

If you know Jerry and wish to honor his contributions to Geography, or would like to contribute to this new award in Geographic Education, please contact Lauren Kidd at the OSU Foundation at lkidd@osugiving.com.



Professor Emeritus Jerry Croft, OSU Geography 1969-1991

Staff and Faculty News



Standing (L-R): Alyson Greiner, Steve Stadler, Jacqueline Vadjunec, Emily Williams, John Davenport, Amy Frazier, Rebecca Sheehan, Carlos Cordova, April Chipman, Ann Adkins, Hongbo Yu, Michael Larson, Bruce Battles, Reuel Hanks
Seated (L-R): Brad Bays, Allen Finchum, Dale Lightfoot, Jon Comer, and Tom Wikle

ANN ADKINS finished her third year in the Geography Department in August. She made it to another National Scrabble Championship in July, but this time it was in Las Vegas, NV. She finished in the middle of her division, but she moved up 10 places from her starting position, so she feels like it wasn't a total loss.

BRUCE BATTLES is starting his 14th year as the coordinator of the Center for Applications of Remote Sensing. He stays busy managing the CARS lab, providing technical support to the department, and instructing courses through OSU Correspondence Education program. When at home, Bruce is doing his best to keep up with his daughters, Maggie and Mollie, who are now 7 years old and attending 2nd grade at Highland Park Elementary.

DR. BRAD BAYS has been active in the area of historic preservation for the last few years. For five years he has conducted field research funded by the National Park Service for the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office (OK/SHPO) to systematically survey historic barns in Oklahoma. Brad has also successfully nominated several barns to the National Register of Historic Places. He works closely with the OSU Department of History and serves on numerous graduate committees. A recent research interest is place branding, an area of marketing research that Brad is attempting to inform with the much older literature of cultural geography. Brad is spearheading the development of an interdisciplinary university Center for Historic Preservation and Heritage Tourism that will unite departments in the College of Arts & Sciences and the College of Engineering, Architecture, and Technology to develop specialized undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

Sharon Bays is a Student Success Coach for the OSU LASSO program and also works at the NOC Student Success Center. Daughter Lydia is a freshman at Louisiana State University, a member of Pi Beta Phi, and a barista at a campus coffee shop. Son Luke is a seventh-grader at Stillwater Middle School who enjoys outdoor adventures with his dad and intends to soon harvest his first whitetail deer.

APRIL CHIPMAN continues to work on the projects brought into the department via the American Association of Petroleum Geologists Foundation (AAPGF) and Oklahoma State University (OSU) Geographic Information System (GIS) Consortium. She continues to expand the breadth of her knowledge with ESRI software, and soon could be considered the Subject Matter Expert (SME) for the department.



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Staff and Faculty News

DR. JON COMER had his busiest travel year ever during 2012-13. Not content to have spent two weeks in Italy in July 2012 with his wife, he went to Minneapolis for a conference in October 2012, Los Angeles for AAG in April 2013, and led an 8-day study abroad trip across Germany in May 2013, visiting Cologne, Berlin, Nuremberg, and Munich as well as making stops in Luxembourg, Belgium, and Salzburg, Austria.

As if that wasn't enough, in July 2013 the Comer family traveled to the British Isles for 12 days, 8 days in Ireland and 4 England. Highlights of the trip included the Cliffs of Moher, Galway, Newgrange, and Dublin in Ireland, all the major tourist stops in London, and Stonehenge and Bath in western England. Not content to sit at home anymore, Jon is planning a study abroad trip to Amsterdam and Paris in May 2014 (with Tom Wikle), making his fifth trip to Europe in a span of 3 years.

When he was in Stillwater, Jon maintained his usual load of teaching, graduate advising, service, and publishing. Family-wise, the end of "free day care" (as Dr. Stadler puts it) arrived with son Eric starting his freshman year at OSU in August 2013. Daughter Alex is a senior and wife Shannon still enjoys teaching first grade at Sangre Ridge Elementary School.

DR. CARLOS CORDOVA just began his 16th year in the Geography Department. During the past year he published three articles on his research in Jordan and South Africa. He finally submitted the manuscript of his book on the Crimean Peninsula (the book is now in review). He is currently advising two master's students, Tom Cox and Carson Bode (the latter as co-advisor). His research is still gravitating around the Quaternary environments, climate change, grasses (not grass), mammoths, elephants, and related issues. This year Dr. Cordova taught Introduction to Physical Geography (honors section), Biogeography, Climate Change, and Geoarchaeology and Environmental History. For the latter, he took the students to a trip to prehistoric sites in Cheyenne, OK, Lubbock, Texas, and Clovis, NM. In his biogeography class he is known for his theories on predators and prey, as well as comparing photosynthesis of C3, C4, and CAM plants with different types of humans. In his Climate Change class he explains the effects of greenhouse gas molecules as people being crowded into a room. As odd as these examples are, they help the students digest the science material.

Carlos collecting grasses in the Mojave Desert.



DR. JOHN DAVENPORT is in his second year with the Department of Geography as a visiting assistant professor. He has academic interests in Natural Resource Conservation especially as it relates to the environmental and cultural aspects of Ecosystem Restoration projects. He has regional interests in the American West and East Asia. A portion of Professor Davenport's research was recently featured in several chapters of an edited volume on Climate Change and Culture Shift that was published by Springer Scientific in October 2013. An ongoing project, that draws from field work conducted in Montana, focuses on rangeland restoration and bison reintroduction in the New West.



Staff and Faculty News

DR. ALLEN FINCHUM: During 2012-13 Allen Finchum continued his longstanding work with the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office as well as working on some other small research projects of personal interest. Allen is still grateful for the support that both Mike Larson and Bruce Battles give to the SHPO project and its' ongoing success. One of the more personal projects has been a return to his earlier (somewhat incomplete) research on the geographic and market aspects of the golf industry and golf courses. He attended both the Annual Meeting of the AAG in Los Angeles as well as the Oklahoma SCAUG conference. Allen went to an Android Programming and Development course with Bruce Battles in July 2013 at Netcom Learning in New York City. His son Curtis continues as a student at OSU, and Tanya continues her work with the Oklahoma Oral History Research Program.



DR. AMY FRAZIER: During the past year, I was finishing up my Ph.D. dissertation in anxious anticipation of joining the Geography Department at OSU as a new Assistant Professor! In support of my Ph.D. research, I was awarded a National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement (DDRI) Grant to study the spatial scale disparities that result when remote sensing data are aggregated or disaggregated for ecological analysis. As part of this work, I collected GPS data of landcover types in a variety of ecosystems across the country this summer including the Cross Timbers Range in Oklahoma. In addition to my dissertation research, I have also been studying the ecological patterns of an invasive species commonly known as saltcedar (*Tamarix* spp.). Saltcedar is a weedy shrub that grows along riparian areas and in recent years has been found growing along the banks of several water bodies in Oklahoma. In order to understand the spread mechanisms of saltcedar as an invasive species in the U.S., I joined a team of researchers traveling to the Gobi Desert in China to study the plants in their native habitat. The goal of this research is to compare native and invasive saltcedar in order to ultimately determine the environmental factors driving saltcedar's rapid colonization patterns in the U.S. so that it can be better controlled by natural resource managers.



This picture was taken near the town of Ejina Qi, which is an oasis in the Gobi Desert. Camels are herded by the local people to provide milk, meat and wool, and they are often found grazing saltcedar because the leaves are extremely salty



Staff and Faculty News

DR. ALYSON GREINER: No mammoth news to report here, but Alyson recalls the excellent SWAAG meeting in Las Cruces, New Mexico back in the fall. The venue for the dinner and keynote speaker was outdoors. No problemo, right? Wrong! Once the sun set and the winds picked up, we knew something was awry. Instead of a pleasant evening outdoors, we froze as the temperatures dropped rapidly and the wind chill took its toll. Yes, it is high desert, but these low temperatures and feisty winds were more than a little unseasonal. I was sitting at a table with NMSU folks and, out of fear that I might suffer hypothermia (yes, I was shivering uncontrollably), one of them retrieved some heavy duty winter gloves from his truck and then offered to give me a ride home. He must have been a boy scout...

The highlight of the spring semester was being on my first sabbatical, which enabled me to spend time at the National Archives doing research on New Deal landscapes. There were some neat discoveries and also some unfortunate ones as well, namely the shock that came when I opened one box of materials only to find that the Oklahoma folder and its contents were missing. No kidding. One can only wonder if another researcher just decided to steal the materials. Who knows. In spite of the intense security there, it is sad to say that theft happens.

Alyson is happy to report, however, that she was awarded a grant from the Oklahoma Historical Society/State Historic Preservation Office to conduct a research and thematic survey of women in Oklahoma history. She will begin working on that this fall. Meanwhile, life partner Luis has been gradually moving toward “flipping” his classroom (no, I did not say flipping off his students...). So, he has developed some pencasts and video-based lectures. At home, we’ve enjoyed the several visits of wild turkeys (of a different sort than the ones in the department). As long as they eat the acorns, we will be more than happy to have them.

DR. REUEL HANKS: The past year presented a major challenge for Reuel Hanks, but with the help and support of family, friends and his colleagues in the department, he is looking forward to the future. Kami Hanks continues to amaze and has mastered the entire alphabet as well as counting to past thirty, already showing more quantitative skills than her father. She enjoys spending time with her grandma, especially shopping at Walmart. Oydin continues to craft an opus on Milton in Russia and looks forward to the conclusion of the process, while Reuel looks forward to teaching an honors seminar on geopolitics in Central Eurasia in the spring of 2014, and possibly conducting research in Kazakhstan. His new motto is *spes numquam fidem Dei*.

MICHAEL LARSON: November 2013 will start Michael’s eighteenth year as Coordinator of Cartography Services. While Michael performs extraordinary work for the faculty members and students of the Department of Geography, he also continues to support faculty, staff and students from other departments on campus as well as work for various entities, large and small, public and private, off campus. Michael’s focus is on two major project areas, his work for the Association of American Petroleum Geologists (AAPG), and his role directing the data collection field work for the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Oklahoma Landmark Inventory (OLI) database update. Continuing his role as an educator, Spring 2013 was Michael’s eleventh year teaching the Computer Cartography course. In addition to teaching, he continues to be involved with assisting a number of the Geography faculty with their field courses. Michael hopes that through his hard work and positive attitude, he will continue to represent the Geography Department, its faculty, staff and students in a professional and competent manner.



Staff and Faculty News

DR. DALE LIGHTFOOT: Since the last Zenith was published, Dale completed research related to a spring 2012 sabbatical (funding agency report and a book chapter) and then settled into another year as Professor (starting 20th year at OSU) and Department Head (14th year). The past fall and spring semesters saw a return of his usual teaching schedule (Geography of the Middle East and International Resource Management), a publication on the assessment of groundwater sustainability through a conference on Traditional Knowledge for Water Resources Management in Iran, and a presentation in Los Angeles on the “Myth of Qanats in the Canary Islands,” drawn from sabbatical research in that Spanish territory. He began the first year of a three-year term on the Fulbright Scholar North Africa Review Committee and traveled to Washington D.C. as part of that service. Closer to home, he also began the first of three years on the OSU committee that selects awardees for the Bailey Scholarship for long-term study abroad and enjoyed working to award money to bright and motivated students heading overseas for a semester or two. He co-directed (with Jackie Vadjunec) a study abroad field course in Morocco in May 2013—his third trip to Morocco with students—and after that amazing experience traveled on to Dakar to meet up with Tom Wikle for a fascinating West African adventure through Senegal, The Gambia, and Guinea-Bissau. Their paper on the historic, UNESCO-protected slave trading sites of West Africa has been accepted for publication. Remembering that travel can also be “just for the fun of it” and doesn’t always have to involve research, Dale took vacations over the summer through the Baltic countries and Scandinavia with his wife, and a “just-because-it’s-there” epic road trip with his son to the end of the road in northern Quebec, near the shore of Hudson Bay. Tory (wife) continues work as Manager of Research Support Services in the College of Arts and Sciences at OSU and Adam (son) has returned to college with a new sense of purpose in completing a degree.

Dale Lightfoot and Tom Wikle visiting with a school teacher in an island village school house off the coast of Guinea-Bissau, West Africa.



DR. REBECCA SHEEHAN: Over the last year, I continued to visit New Orleans, where my partner, Kelli Welch, lives and where much of my research interests reside and continue to develop, particularly concerning the history of nuisance laws and public space. As with most (all?) cities, New Orleans has a colorful historical and contemporary geography in defining “nuisance.” Moreover, the more recent “nuisance” laws, now known “as quality of life” ordinances, have real implications for those persons experiencing chronic homelessness. Additionally, with dramatic increases in real estate prices—New Orleans is one of the fastest growing cities in the country—increased displacement and temporary homelessness fears have become realities for many lower-income and even middle-income people. Though increased growth and diversity (such as technology startups) in the city’s economy is welcome, affordable housing increasingly eludes the majority of New Orleanians (according to New Orleans’s chief demographer, Allison Plyer). Beyond my work, I spent the summer renovating my little bungalow, just three blocks east of Stillwater’s Main Street. A couple of other OSU faculty members have moved into my neighborhood too, adding to an already delightfully mixed area demographic. In addition, over the last seven years downtown Stillwater has welcomed several more shops, restaurants, and bars—making it an exciting area for my corgi, Lucy, to be walked.



Staff and Faculty News

DR. STEVE STADLER is happily enjoying year 34 in the department. There are many physical geography problems yet to solve! He continues as State Geographer, President of OKAGE (the state's K-12 Geographic Alliance), on the board of the Oklahoma Renewable Energy Council, and on the board of the state Geographic Information Council. Research is still concentrating on Oklahoma wind power with recent events showing greater "pushback" to turbine placement now that they are being installed farther east near more of Oklahoma's population. Steve's wife, Barb continues as a tenured math instructor at Northern Oklahoma College in Stillwater. Last summer we were lucky enough to enjoy a 40th anniversary cruise to the Alaska panhandle. The picture is of us and son John and his wife, Audrey, looking like intrepid geographers on the Mendenhall Glacier near Juneau.



DR. JACQUELINE VADJUNEC: My co-edited book, *Land Change Science, Political Ecology and Sustainability: Synergies and Divergences* (co-edited with Dr. Christian Branstromm from TAMU) for Earthscan/Routledge was finally published in September 2013. I spent the summer in Morocco co-teaching the Moroccan Cultural and Natural Resources class with Dr. Dale Lightfoot. Morocco was amazing, especially the vibrant colors, incredible food, wonderful music, awe-inspiring architecture, arts and handicrafts. My NSF funded research continues in New Mexico, and the Oklahoma Panhandle on issues related to land-use, vulnerability, and resiliency, especially under drought conditions.

The muddy-boot field trip tradition with students continues. Last Fall, the students of my Field Techniques class went to Roman Nose State Park to work on various mapping and research projects for the Oklahoma State Parks Office of Tourism.



Staff and Faculty News

DR. TOM WIKLE: Now in his 25th year at OSU, Tom Wikle continues to teach physical geography for the Geography Department while serving as associate dean in the College of Arts and Sciences. In January Tom traveled to Ethiopia to visit three college campuses including Haramaya University in the ancient Islamic city of Hara. In June Tom returned to Africa with Dale Lightfoot for work on a project targeting 16th century slave forts in Senegal and The Gambia. Last year Tom and Jon Comer published a paper exploring the world-wide adoption of social networking sites. He also worked with former OSU colleague Todd Fagin (now employed by OU and the Oklahoma Biological Survey) on a paper that will soon appear in *Transactions in GIS*. In July Tom completed his commercial sea plane rating on Lake Hood near Anchorage, Alaska before serving as co-instructor (with Matt Tueth) for a course examining resource management in Alaskan national parks. In his spare time Tom is busy giving flight instruction at Stillwater Regional Airport. His wife Missy volunteers for Stillwater K-Life while serving as Director of the OSU Office of Student Orientation. Their son Garrett (19) graduated from Stillwater High and is attending OSU on a Regents Scholarship while their daughter Paige (21) is a junior at OSU.

EMILY WILLIAMS: Having worked at a church and a mental health center in the past (those are not the same place), I can say that OSU's Department of Geography is THE best place in the world to work! I have so enjoyed my year here, getting to know the faculty and the graduate students who have made me feel at home here. Thank you for letting me work with you—you are the greatest!

As I compose this my mind is dashing off into so many directions, as tomorrow my husband Tom and I put our One and Only on a plane for study abroad in Dubrovnik, Croatia. I think I'm anticipating his semester away as much or more than Bryn is! (Very likely because Tom and I plan to fly to Dubrovnik in December when Bryn finishes his semester to bring him home *via* England and Wales, Tom's home country.) Tom and I are looking forward to this "empty nest" thing—being free to travel when we want (yeah, if there are no lawns to mow or ball games...), not as much laundry and a lower food bill.

This year I've been involved as chair of the Missions Committee at my church, leading a mission trip to help with a Native American church in Watonga; a soprano in our church choir with occasional church solos; I've just started as a worker with our University Bible Study group on Sundays and will start next week as a "ringer" in the bell choir. I'm a foodie, so I'm always on the watch for a good recipe—preferably one with lotsa cheese and green chiles, or one with lotsa butter, caramel, chocolate and/or nuts! If you see one you think I might like, please share!!

DR. HONGBO YU: In the past year, Dr. Hongbo Yu teamed up with colleagues within and outside the department to work on three externally funded projects. He contributed his expertise in GIS and transportation geography to a project led by Dr. Steven Stadler to evaluate the socioeconomic impacts of two wind farms in Oklahoma. The project was completed successfully early this year. This summer, he also completed his work on a one-year research project funded by the Oklahoma Transportation Center (OkTC). As a co-PI, he led the work on two of the five components in this project, including establishing an integrated GIS database to manage a variety of datasets related to flash flood hazards and developing custom visual and spatial analysis GIS tools to support road closure decision-making during flash flood emergencies. Ms. Qinyue (Arlene) Pan, a Ph.D. student in the department, was supported by this OkTC grant and worked as a graduate research associate on this project. Hongbo also started working on a two-year research project funded by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation last October. In this project, a team of researchers from OSU and OU work together to find ways that can accurately forecast and detect the formation of black ice on the road surface and effectively deliver warning messages to drivers on the road. The outcomes from this project are expected to help drivers better deal with black ice hazards during the winter seasons.



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Former Staff/Faculty News

DR. JERRY CROFT (Professor Emeritus): I am getting ready to launch my 50th year of teaching this next academic year of 2013-2014. I am finishing my 15th year at the University of Iowa, and I teach classes for the International Studies Center in the College of Arts & Sciences. I was asked a few years ago to design and develop the classes I wished to teach at Iowa so I teach a class on the European Union, a class entitled Developed & Developing Places, and three one semester hour field classes as part of a series on European Ethnic Towns in Iowa and they are: Germany & the Amanas, Pella & the Dutch, and Poland & the Czech Republic (the national Czech & Slovak Museum is nearby). This is a perfect schedule for me and the University treats me as if I had won the Nobel Peace Prize.

I still remember with great pride my accomplishment of helping to bring John Rooney to OSU which created the modern Department of Geography as we split off from Geology in 1968. When I joined the OSU department in 1966 and then put in my 25 years with over 25,000 students in my various classes, I had no idea that the department would be so successful today. I remember Steve Stadler when he was just an old boy or a young man--I forget which!!! Everyone in the OSU geography community should be grateful for the pioneering work of John Rooney, who put us on the "national map", and today's leadership of Dale Lightfoot and Tom Wikle. They are not only good leaders but very good people and for that reason my wife, Laurie, who is an associate professor of gifted education at Iowa, and I have established the Jerry Croft Teaching of Geography Endowed Scholarship at OSU. For those of you able to do so, please support the outstanding work of the marvelous faculty, staff, and students in our geography department.

DR. RICHARD HECOCK (Professor Emeritus) recently separated from the Pelican River Watershed District. What started as a retirement project after leaving OSU-geography grew to a 21-year career during which much was learned about limnology, zoning and climate impacts on lakes, aquatic invasive species, recreationist motivations and behaviors, and more. Geographical perspectives facilitated successful encounters with researchers, consultants, contractors, community leaders and officials. The idea of retiring again mostly had to do with finding time for watching the sun rise over the lake while reading New Yorkers and drinking coffee, and there has been some of that.

Other activities are on-going, especially Rotary, Lake Associations, even some music. Bicycling has re-entered the picture, nothing major, just errands around town (at least until the snow flies, then a switch to skis). There has been some dabbling in family histories, especially the geographical bits. Otherwise, there is traveling, especially to eastern states to be with children and grandchildren and to Florida, Quebec, Ohio and Chiapas (Mex.) last year. Cuba and northern Africa are in the planning stages for winter escapes.

The Reverend Georgia continues to thrive , having expanded her ministry to include region- and diocese-wide responsibilities. She serves a half-dozen other local groups: food pantry, crisis center, United Way and more. Family summer and winter visits to the Northwoods lake home are treasured. Others are welcome to come too. rhecock@arvig.net.

DR. JOHN ROONEY (Professor Emeritus): It has been a few years since my last submission to the Zenith. Much has happened to us and our family since our last communication. Our three children and ten grandchildren are all thriving and bring us joy on a daily basis. Beth, husband John Powers, and three offspring are completing their 24th year in San Francisco. Our grandson, Ryan is an MBA student at the University of South Florida after graduating from the University of Arizona. (His major professor is Bill Sutton and OSU alum. I was Bill's dissertation advisor in 1981). Liam is a sophomore at Creighton, and Kyra is a senior at St. Ignatius in San Francisco.

Continued on next page



Former Staff/Faculty News

Kate and husband, Bob Harstad, are in Edmond, after spending ten years in Spain where Bob played Pro basketball. Sons Jack and Luke are following in the footsteps of their dad, excelling in basketball and all other sports. We get to see them often. Son, Dan and his wife Jacqy, plus five little girls, Tory, Tatum, Mia, Reese and Devyn, reside in Broken Arrow, a suburb of Tulsa. Major Dan is a retired F-16 pilot in the Oklahoma Air National Guard. He has completed three tours in Iraq. But most importantly, he established the Folds of Honor Foundation in 2007, to provide college scholarships to spouses and children of American servicemen and women killed or permanently disabled in the Mid-East conflicts. I serve on The Board of Directors of the Foundation. We raise money through the Patriot Golf Day initiative, in partnership with the PGA of America, the U.S. Golf Association and several corporate sponsors including Anheuser Busch, Titelist, Polo, Quick Trip and Jimmy John's. So far we have brought in over \$30M and awarded over 5,000 University scholarships.

Sandy and I continue to live in two places. We moved, after 39 years on Black Oak Drive, to a new "Garden Home" two miles to the west. It was difficult with all the memories created there, many associated with numerous geography bashes and cultural fests, but we have adjusted to our new place. We have less space and fewer things, but that is better. Our summer home is in Grand Haven, Michigan, recently selected by Gallup-Health Ways as the 2nd happiest and healthiest city in America. We are still working on getting happier and healthier. This year we had over 60 days of house guests seeking that magic solution. We continue to oversee the old and hallowed Grand Haven Golf Club, which we and a group of investors acquired in 1998. It is a great job and really keeps us occupied and away from Oklahoma in the summer.

Our most recent project is the Patriot Golf Club. The Patriot, in Owasso, (just northeast of Tulsa) opened in May, 2010. Please check it out at patriotgolfclub.com. It is a partnership with our son Dan and several Tulsa friends. We believe that it is a truly special place and invite you to come for golf or an old fashioned geography field trip.

The discipline of Geography has been very good to us. It has offered possibilities way beyond our imagination. It has provided perspective, both big picture and micro views as well. It is our hope that our OSU colleagues will embrace all that is possible. In the words of my best friends, Dick, Steve and Keith, "Grab for all the gusto that you can get!"

DR. STEVE TWEEDIE (Associate Professor Emeritus): Well, we sold our house and have had a year to get used to living in our Oakcreek cohousing community. It's gone well. We've even trained our cats to go for a walk. Herding cats turned out to be much easier than getting faculty to agree on anything. Otherwise, no major changes in health or activities. We're still making trips to visit family in North Carolina and Scotland.

I've got a new consulting project. The James Beard Foundation gives annual awards to chefs and restaurants (for them the equivalent of Oscars). They have ten regions, and wanted a cultural geographer to evaluate regional balance and suggest possible changes. Unfortunately, they didn't ask me to evaluate the restaurants.



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Graduate Student News

MASTER'S STUDENTS:

Clay Barrett
Joel Barrow
Carson Bode
Thomas Cox
Stephanie Eades
Matt Haffner
Stephanie Koehn
Christopher Krieger
Scott Kusselson
Junlong Liu
Katherine Mentzel
Matthew O'Neill
Gustavo Ovando
Kathryn Roberts
Jennifer Sebesta
Sean Thomas
William Van Ness

DOCTORAL STUDENTS:

Samayita Bandyopadhyay
Leonard Bombom
Thomas Craig
Steven Ericson
William Flynn
Robert Garrett
Amy Graham
Stephanie Heald
Keeley Heise
Jeremy Henning
Nguyen Le
Victoria Lightfoot
Jordan McAlister
Stuart McAllister
William McBrayer
Qinyue Pan
Adam Payne
Justin Plymell
Nick Rose
Siewe Siewe
Christopher Storm
Aswin Subanthore
Yanxia Wu
Yun Zhao

Graduate Student News

SAMAYITA BANDYOPADHYAY: I am a first year Ph.D. student in Oklahoma State University. My research interests mostly involve human-environment dynamics, particularly in socio-ecologically vulnerable landscapes. My Master's thesis was on the Anthropogenic impacts on landslides in the tea gardens of Kurseong, Darjeeling Himalayas. I look forward to work on environmental vulnerability and its relationship with human life.

CLAY BARRETT is an OSU alum with an undergraduate degree in Environmental Sciences with a Natural Resources Management focus. His interest in the Geography's Master's program stems from the exposure to the department while earning a GIS certificate. Research interests are remote sensing of natural resources and water quality in particular. Clay lives on a small acreage in the country with his wife, son, and chickens. On weekends he enjoys chainsaw therapy and gardening.

THOMAS COX: I am a second year Masters student from Claremore, OK. I received my Bachelor's degree from Oklahoma State University in May 2012. I am studying geoarchaeology under Dr. Cordova. My thesis is a "Spatial and Geomorphological Analysis of Mammoth and Mastodon Remain Localities in Southwest Oklahoma". I am a TA for cartography, remote sensing, and GIS: resource management applications. This last summer I participated in an archaeology excavation, excavating an ancient bison kill site in the panhandle of Oklahoma. I am interested in all things outdoors. My two greatest achievements are my son and daughter, both of whom are currently serving in the United States Army. I am living proof that you're never too old to follow your dreams.

THOMAS CRAIG: I am a first year PhD student, whose interests primarily lie within cultural and historical geography. Specifically, I am interested in geographic education, along with a growing interest in the links between social media and geography. I earned a MA in Geography from the University of Akron (2008), and a BS in Secondary Education from Concordia University, Nebraska (2006). I spent the past five years teaching high school social studies in Carson City, Nevada. I enjoy traveling, collecting postcards and Christmas ornaments, and spending time with my wife, Keira, and our two children, Jackson and Madison.

STEVEN ERICSON is a Ph.D. student who completed the GIS Certificate during the Spring 2013 semester. He began an appointment as an instructor at The University of Alabama, in Tuscaloosa, AL, on Aug. 16. He is teaching four courses: two sections of World Regional Geography, Geography of Europe, and Cultural Geography.

ROBERT D. GARRETT is a fifth year Ph.D. student from Tulsa, OK. He earned his Bachelor's degree in History and Master's degree in International Studies from Oklahoma State University. His academic interests are cultural geography, globalization, international migration, and qualitative methods. His regional interests are East and Southeast Asia. He was awarded the Robert E. Norris Scholarship for field research, which will help fund his dissertation study about Western expatriates living and working in Bangkok, Thailand.

AMY GRAHAM: I am a fifth-year Ph.D. student originally from Ponca City, OK. I received my Master's degree from the OSU Department of Geography in 2009, and have a Bachelor's degree in Anthropology from the University of Oklahoma. My interests include cultural geography, human-environment interactions, vulnerability, hazards, and political ecology. I am working with my advisor, Dr. Jackie Vadjunec, on a project focused on the vulnerability and resiliency of cattle ranchers in the face of extreme drought in Cimarron County, OK and Union County, NM. We traveled to the study area for a week this summer, and despite the lack of any cell service whatsoever and the multiple late-night encounters with scorpions, I very much enjoyed getting to know the area and the people. I am looking forward to returning next spring and summer for fieldwork.

MATTHEW HAFFNER: I am a second year Master's student originally from Pleasant Hill, Missouri. As an undergraduate, I double majored in geography and mathematics at Pittsburg State University, where I also ran cross country. This summer I participated in a transportation/GIS internship at the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments in Oklahoma City. I am currently working on my thesis titled "Measuring social interaction potential in Tulsa and Oklahoma City," and I plan to graduate in the spring of 2014. My research interests include urban geography, transportation geography, quantitative methods, and sustainability.



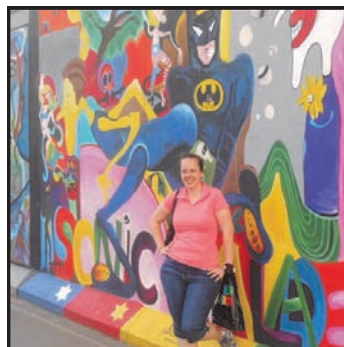
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Graduate Student News

KEELEY HEISE: I am a first year PhD student. After years of work and two different schools, I finally earned my Master's degree in May 2013. Part of my graduation gift to myself was to go on the trip to Germany in May as just a tourist because I've always wanted to go back to visit the country in which I was born. It was a fun and memorable 9-day trip through some of the important German WW2 sites, including my favorite stop: the Dachau Concentration Camp. A lot of ground was covered in those 9 days, and I hope to go back soon to see some of the things I missed (and maybe back a detour to Stuttgart to see where I was born). This fall begins the journey towards my Ph.D. right here at OSU. I hope to be able to continue on with my Master's research on social vulnerability to blizzards and snowstorms in the northern Great Plains of the US. This school year is going to be an interesting journey, and I am looking forward to it.

Keeley at the entry gate to Dachau. The door says Arbeit macht frei...(work will set you free)



Keeley standing beside one of the murals along the longest stretch of the Berlin Wall that remains standing.

JEREMY HENNING is a Ph.D. student who plans to integrate remote sensing and water resources for his dissertation. He graduated in 2010 with a BA in Anthropology (minor in Geology) and then an MS in Geoscience in May 2013 from Fort Hays State University in Kansas. He has an almost 10-year-old daughter.

STEPHANIE KOEHN: Last year, I made great strides towards my thesis on the embodiment of American renaissance festivals. My field research consisted of participant observation and interviews that were conducted at the Kansas City Renaissance Festival and the Texas Renaissance festival. The people were more than willing to allow me to interview them and I had a great time learning all I could about these festivals and the people who attend them. I plan on finishing my field research this Fall and would be more than happy to talk about it with anyone.

Kansas City Renaissance Festival
October 14th, 2012



SCOTT KUSSELSON: I have been working full time with KAMO Power's K-Powernet division since April 2013 and was an intern with them previously. I am a GIS Analyst planning fiber optic routes within the company's coverage area, which also includes fieldwork. In July my company sent me to the ESRI Users Conference in San Diego and I defended my thesis in August.

JUNLONG LIU: I am a second year masters student. My undergraduate degree is geography education, but I became more interested in geo-techniques and their applications in natural resource issues during my Master's study. I feel blessed to be in the OSU geography department. Despite some classes that nearly killed me, I had a great time in the department. As an international student, I am still curious about American culture, and confused sometimes, but I enjoy the experience. I plan to continue on for a Ph.D. after I graduate.



Graduate Student News

JORDAN MCALISTER: I am a Ph.D. student originally from West Texas, and I received my B.A. in geography and history at Texas Tech University in 2009. I will graduate with my M.A. in geography from Kansas State University this December. My interests are in cultural and historical geography. I am particularly fascinated by architectural geography, New Deal artwork, and the historical geography of the Great Plains of the United States and Canada.

GUSTAVO OVANDO was born in Mexico City but grew up in the tropical shores of the Gulf of Mexico in Campeche. He graduated from Brigham Young University with a B.S. in Geography. He is interested in the applications of GIS to solve transportation and resource management problems. He is married and has an almost 2-year-old baby boy. He loves sports, especially rugby and college football.

KATHRYN ROBERTS: I am a first year master's degree student. I graduated from James Madison University with my bachelor of science degree in Geography with a concentration in Environmental Conservation and GIS. My current research interests are in natural resource management, human-environment interactions and social vulnerability. On my free time I like to run, hike, camp and rock climb.

NICK ROSE is a 3rd year Ph.D. student from Bethel, Ohio. He received his Master's from the Department of Geography at Oklahoma State University in 2011. During the past two years, Nick received a Park Break Fellowship and a Travel Grant from the George Wight Society. The fellowship allowed Nick to spend spring break 2011 at Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (DWGRA). During his stay at DWGRA, Nick and the other Park Break Fellows worked with the Pocono Environmental Education Center (PEEC) to develop environmental education lesson plans for eighth graders. PEEC plans on using the lesson plans during their summer camps. Finally, the Travel Grant from the George Wight Society was provided so that the Park Break Fellows could present their work at the 2012 George Wright Society Conference in Denver, CO. For Nick, the most important development in the past year is his marriage to Yanxia Wu. They were married in Ohio during May and in China during July.

SIEWE SIEWE SIEWE: I am a sixth year PhD student from Cameroon, with research interests in human dimensions of global change, cultural and political ecology, remote sensing and GIS. My advisor is Dr. Jacqueline Vadjunc.

SEAN V. THOMAS: I am a second year Master's student, currently living in Chandler, Oklahoma. I received my undergraduate degree in Secondary Education/Social Studies from Oklahoma State University in May 2011. My area of research is the geography of memory, focusing on Stone Mountain, Georgia.

WILLIAM VAN NESS: I am now entering my third and final year in the Master's program. My creative component research is going well. I am hoping to defend my proposal very soon and get to the heart of my research after that. Despite a serious medical issue, my summer was fairly productive. I am looking forward to this year and completing my research and earning my degree.

YANXIA "LAURA" WU: From this semester, I am a student during the daytime, and a teacher in evenings. It is quite challenging, but I enjoy it. I enjoy playing different roles everyday. I enjoy trying to read every student through their eyes. Thanks for giving me this opportunity to be a TA! Thanks for keeping me away from evening snacks!! :)

YUN ZHAO: I got married in late February while finishing my first year as a Ph.D. here. In the meantime, I had my first trip to Europe under Dr. Comer's WWII: the March across Germany class this May. The 9-day trip was well-organized and fulfilling. It is amazing to see all the historical sites/landscapes hundreds of years ago and how well the structures have been preserved in Europe. I would also like to thank Dr. Tweedie for offering me the Tweedie Travel Scholarship for this trip.



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Forum of Geography Graduate Students

Hello All, my name is Nick Rose, and I am the President of the Forum of Geography Graduate Students (FoGG). FoGG's mission is to foster a dialog between the students and the faculty/staff. This dialog promotes professional growth and an improvement in all aspects of the graduate experience. This year FoGG sponsored an AAG practice session in March 2013 and a Faculty vs. Student volleyball game in May 2013. This school year FoGG plans on continuing the AAG practice session and to start a reading and writing accountability group. The goal of this accountability group is to foster accountability among the graduate students, in order to share ideas and provide support for academic studies and personal life. In addition, FoGG will be continuing its involvement with GIS Day at the Capital. FoGG became involved in GIS Day at the Capital last year upon the request of Michael Larson. This year FoGG's role will increase, to demonstrate the work done by students using GIS in the Department of Geography at Oklahoma State University.

Center for Applications of Remote Sensing

It has been another busy year in the CARS lab with many projects. CARS continues to work with Dr. Allen Finchum on a project with the State Historic Preservation Office. This past year, CARS, in conjunction with Cartography Services, completed a global heat flow mapping project for the American Association of Petroleum Geologists. The CARS lab, with the guidance of Dr. Amy Frazier, is currently working on a project led by Dr. J.D. Carlson to update the OKFire model.

The CARS lab continues to represent the university and the geography department at the local elementary schools by conducting hands-on learning activities during their annual Outdoor Day. During the activity, elementary students are introduced to aerial photographs, map making, and global positioning systems.



Two elementary students enjoying Outdoor Day.

Cartography Services

This past year has once again been very busy for all of us at Cartography Services. As usual, we have spent most of our time split between several key working areas; the major cartographic projects, map design and compilation work (for both departmental and non-departmental clients), large format printing, and education and outreach.

The largest of the projects being overseen by Cartography Services is the work for the American Association of Petroleum Geologists (AAPG). This past year was our fourth year of this multi-year funded project. The AAPG work is comprised of many smaller cartographic/GIS projects that vary in nature and complexity. The AAPG project is a large endeavor that consumes a lot of time and effort, but returns invaluable experience for the many students working at Cartography Services. Under the leadership of April Chipman, our staff GIS Specialist, we continue the work.

In addition to the AAPG work, Cartography Services is also in its fourth year working with Dr. Allen Finchum on the SHPO/OLI project. This project, funded by the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office, consists of sending teams of student employees to the field (mostly small rural Oklahoma towns) locating properties and updating the Oklahoma Landmark Inventory (OLI) database. This past summer we sent two teams of students out to canvas the eastern and southeastern counties of the state.

Last spring, Cartography Services took the lead and with the help of a number of student members from the OSU Geography Club, Gamma Theta Upsilon (GTU), and the Forum of Geography Graduate Students (FoGG), we sponsored an exhibit at the 2013 GIS Day at the Capitol. The focus of the exhibit was “the student’s opportunities and involvement in the Department of Geography, specifically how it relates to GIS and GIS education”. We would like to thank the following students for their participation in this event: Helen Agnew, Andrew Potter, Alex Hubbard, Chelsea Steiner, Michael Priest and Yanxia Wu.

Cartography Services would like to acknowledge and thank the following students for their hard work and service as employees of Cartography Services over the past year:

Helen Agnew
Leonard Bombom
Alex Comer

Tom Cox
Danielle Dear
Stephanie Heald

Keeley Heise
Chelsea Plunkett
Andrew Potter

Chelsea Steiner
Christopher Storm



Below: Michael Larson, Chelsea Steiner, and Helen Agnew at GIS Day 2013



Above: Chelsea Steiner, Yanxia Wu, Andrew Potter, Michael Larson, Michael Priest, Alex Hubbard, and Helen Agnew



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Geography Colloquia

- 03/04/2013 Laurel Smith, Department of Geography, University of Oklahoma
Mediating Indigenous Geographies
- 04/01/2013 Timothy G. Anderson, Department of Geography, Ohio University
Pennsylvania German Settlement in Ohio
- 04/15/2013 Graduate Student Presentations
- 10/7/2013 Justin Holman, Ph.D., CEO, Aftermarket Analytics
"Beyond ArcGIS: Spatial Career Planning in 2013"
- 11/18/2013 Assistant Professor Candidate Presentation
- 11/25/2013 Assistant Professor Candidate Presentation
- 12/02/2013 Assistant Professor Candidate Presentation

Journal of Cultural Geography

Editor Alyson is pleased to report a new first for the journal. An article published in the *Journal of Cultural Geography* has won the "best article" prize for 2012, awarded by the European Society of Environmental History. Ben Anderson of the University of Gloucester authored, "The Construction of an Alpine Landscape: Building, Representing and Affecting the Eastern Alps, c. 1885–1914." It is a very interesting article. For OSU alums, students, and faculty, you can view or download the article via the library website.

The journal also featured a special issue, "A Tribute to James (Pete) Shortridge." in February. In conjunction with the Cultural Geography Specialty Group (CGSG) of the AAG, the journal sponsored Lily Kong of the National University of Singapore, as the Marquee Speaker this year. Her address, "Balancing Spirituality and Secularism, Globalism and Nationalism: The Geographies of Identity, Integration and Citizenship in Schools," can also be read in the October 2013 issue of the journal.



Certificates in GIS Earned

SUMMER 2013:

Mary Niles

SPRING 2013:

Jao-Ming Huang
David Brinkley
Alexander Voit
Steven Ericson

SUMMER 2013:

Helen Agnew

Bachelor's Degrees Earned

FALL 2012:

Ryan Clark
Michael Fagan
Mary Niles

SPRING 2013:

Helen Agnew
Andrew Porter
Alexander Voit
Samantha West

SUMMER 2013:

Jessica Setzer

Master's Degrees Earned

SPRING 2013:

Keeley Heise
Advisor: Stephen Stadler
Thesis: "Assessing the Vulnerability of the Northern Great Plains to a Severe Snowstorm or Blizzard"

SUMMER 2013:

Daniel Wilson
Advisor: Jacqueline Vadjunec
Thesis: "The Role of Local Institutions on Deforestation and Degradation in the Kaimosi Forest, Western Kenya"

Ph.D. Degrees Earned

FALL 2012:

Shireen Hyrapiet
Advisor: Alyson Greiner
Dissertation title: "Ghosts of the Past or Relics of the Future? A Geographical Analysis of the Hand-Pulled Rickshaws of Calcutta"

Weiping Li
Advisor: Stephen Stadler
Dissertation title: "The Influences of Geographic Factors on The Complementary Nature of Wind Power and Insolation"

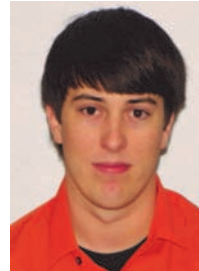


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Geography Department Undergraduate Student Employees

Current undergraduate student employees (L-R below): Alex Comer (SHPO), Dedra Fenley (front office), Curtis Finchum (SHPO), Taylor Iberosi (mammoth project), Kelsey Smith (front office), Shawna Smith (mammoth project), and Chelsea Steiner (SHPO).



Undergraduate Geography Club

The Geography Club held officer elections at the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year under the guidance of the club adviser, Dr. Jianjun Ge. Alex Hubbard was elected Secretary, Catherine Ferrell was elected Treasurer, Andrew Potter was elected Vice President, and Helen Agnew was elected President. In late October, the club took its annual fall camping trip to Roman Nose State Park. In March, the Geography Club officers attended GIS Day at the Capitol with Mr. Michael Larson. In April, two Geography Club officers received awards at the Spring Awards Gathering. Alex Hubbard and Andrew Potter were the recipients of the Alyson Greiner Undergraduate Travel Award. This helped Alex to travel to Washington during the summer to work as an interpretive guide at Olympic National Park. Andrew traveled to Philadelphia to attend Temple University's Seasonal Law Enforcement Training Program. He also received a scholarship award from SCAUG.



Geography Club officers Alex Hubbard, Andrew Potter, and Helen Agnew with Geography Club member Samantha West at the Spring Awards Gathering.



SCAUG Scholarship Winner Andrew Potter



Undergraduate Students & Their Hometowns

Brooke Atherton, Edmond, OK
 Clint Bales, Bartlesville, OK
 Tommy Casey, Sligo, Ireland
 Ryan Conner, Ozark, AR
 Nicholas Deyoe, Jones, OK
 Jill Drummond, Hominy, OK
 Emily Ellis, Edmond, OK
 Tayler Gallien, Broken Arrow, OK
 Whitney Helmuth, Adair, OK
 Alexandria Hubbard, Arlington, TX
 Taylor Iberosi, Dallas, TX
 Lee Johnson, W. Lafayette, IN
 Jacob Joyner, Oklahoma City, OK
 Falon King, Perry, OK
 Kirsten Kuhn, Pampa, TX
 Sarah Lamoreaux, Mounds, OK
 Morgan Lee, Seminole, OK
 Adam Majors, Allen, TX

Zachary Marschik, Moore, OK
 Lauren Montalbano, Broken Arrow, OK
 Curtis Moss, Ruidoso, NM
 Allen Nicholson, Cushing, OK
 Andrew Potter, Ardmore, OK
 Michael Priest, Collinsville, OK
 Ross Romero, Fairborn, OH
 Nathan Rosecrans, Edmond, OK
 Greg Schiller, Colleyville, TX
 Catherine Shropshire, The Woodlands, TX
 Michael Sloan, Tulsa, OK
 Nathan Smith, Medicine Lodge, KS
 Ryan Smith, Tulsa, OK
 Chelsea Steiner, Woodward, OK
 Keith Waag, Claremore, OK
 Connor Wenning, Richardson, TX
 Trenton Williams, Oklahoma City, OK
 Lauren Wood, El Reno, OK



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Undergraduate Student News

ALEX HUBBARD: Interpretive Guide in Olympic National Park

Alex Hubbard worked at Lake Crescent Lodge in Olympic National Park as an interpretive hiking and kayaking guide over the summer of 2013. By earning the Greiner Travel Scholarship Award, she was able to visit other national parks along the drive to Washington State, including Yosemite, Redwood National and State Parks. She was also in charge of conducting interpretive campfires in the evenings, renting out kayaks and canoes to park visitors and managing the landscaping of Lake Crescent Lodge facility. Alex developed her own evening interpretive program called, "Creatures of the Night at Olympic National Park" which focused on nocturnal animals' behaviors and habitats. This year in particular was the 75th anniversary of Olympic's opening. Lake Crescent is a 9 by 1 mile wide lake at the northern most region of the Olympic National Park area. The park is well known for its affiliation as a National Heritage Site. Other famous aspects of the park include its mossy features, abundance of Northern Spotted Owl population and heavy precipitation patterns, which reach about 10 to 15 feet of rain per year.

The hiking tours Alex lead went through a one-mile loop trail called "Moments in Time" during which guests were escorted through the old growth forest. The living trees on this tour were up to 500 years old, however some of the non-living material was up 800 years old. Another guided hike option was the "Marymere Falls Trail", a 1.8-mile hike. The Marymere Falls hike hugs Barnes Creek for a majority of the way and then cuts through old growth forest as well. It's ending is at a 90 ft waterfall that is the source of Barnes Creek: the largest tributary that enters Lake Crescent. On the tours, Alex would indicate flora and fauna species, explain geologic phenomenon and Native American cultural histories as well as Olympic National Park political history. The kayaking tours consisted of a one or two hour loop around the middle section of the lake. These tours had an aquatic theme, but generally the same sort of information was portrayed during these excursions. Lake Crescent is an ancient glacial valley that has been filled by cold creek waters over several thousand years. Scenic views of the two tallest peaks, Mount Storm King and Pyramid Peak could be seen from all angles of the lodge. Additionally she was a member of the Lake Crescent Lodge's Green team in which the members would disperse about the park and pick up litter along the roads. It was an exciting summer full of rain, smores, fire starting and even a few boat rescues.



Topographic Map of Lake Crescent



Alex during a guided hiking tour



Marymere Falls

Undergraduate Student News

ANDREW POTTER: Ranger Training

This summer Andrew attended Temple University's Seasonal Law Enforcement Training Program in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This training is required by the National Park Service for all entry-level rangers. It lasted 14 weeks from May to August. The highlights included criminal justice, firearms training, and defensive tactics. Andrew looks forward to putting this training to work after graduation and entering the National Park Service as a law enforcement ranger.



Above: Andrew on the firing range.

Below: Andrew at Great Smoky Mountains National Park



Andrew (back row, far right) with his classmates.



Geographers in the Field

TOM COX: Helena Mammoth Dig

In September 2013 a mammoth skeleton was discovered by a company excavating a trench for a new natural gas line in Alfalfa County, in northwest Oklahoma. The Oklahoma Archaeological Survey was notified and faculty and students from the OSU Department of Geography became involved in the project through the efforts of MS student Tom Cox. Tom is studying geoaerchaeology; specifically conducting a spatial and geomorphological study of mammoths and mastodons in Oklahoma. Geoarchaeology is multidisciplinary in that it incorporates geography, geology and archaeology. He hopes that information gathered from related sites will enable him to determine the relative age of the deposits that have preserved the animal, and the depositional environment. It is then his goal to find out if this is consistent across the landscape by referencing it to other known mammoth sites.

One of the fun things about this project is that we get to excavate a mammoth. This is not an easy task and requires a great amount of people power. Several faculty, students and family have volunteered their time for this endeavor. Without their help this would be a daunting task, to say the least. However, it gives people an opportunity to get involved in another aspect of physical geography, and learn archaeological techniques. This is also important for geography and OSU in that we get to display the mammoth once it has been properly prepared. Sometime in the future individuals involved in the excavation will be able to say they were a part of history by bringing Oklahoma State University its first mammoth.



(Left to Right) Carlos Cordova (Geography), Lee Bement (OK Archaeological Survey), and Tom Cox (Geography) looking over the mammoth skull.



Geographers in the Field



A great group of volunteers digging up bones, (L to R) Jackie Vadjunec, John Gleason, Debbie Potter, Amy Frazier, Shaun McCoshum, and Catherine Shropshire.



Geography major Taylor Iberosi and graduate student Tom Cox mapping the bone layout.



Robert Bartmess (OSU surveyor) and Geography major Ross Romero mapping the site. Ross will be working with ground penetrating radar (GPR) to map other mammoths in the area.



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Geographers in the Field

ROBERT GARRETT: Thai Spirit Houses

Robert spent the summer of 2012 living in Bangkok, Thailand. During his stay he conducted interviews with Thai citizens about their religious beliefs and practices associated with Thai Spirit Houses. The data from his fieldwork will be utilized to write a report intended for publication. Also, during his stay, Robert completed a two-month long Thai intensive language course.

In Spring 2014, Robert will again return to Thailand to begin his study on Western expatriates living and working in Bangkok. He intends to stay at least one year in order to collect data and continue honing his Thai language skills.



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Geographers in the Field

STEPHANIE KOEHN: American Renaissance Festivals

Last year, I made great strides toward my thesis on the embodiment of American renaissance festivals, thanks to the Norris Field Research award I received. My field research consisted of participant observation and interviews that were conducted at the Kansas City Renaissance Festival and the Texas Renaissance festival. The people were more than willing to allow me to interview them and I had a great time learning all I could about these festivals and the people who attend them. I plan on finishing my field research this fall and would be more than happy to talk about it with anyone interested.



Left: "Hanging around" in the stockade at the Kansas City Renaissance Festival



Right: Interviewing an organizer at the Kansas City Renaissance Festival



Left: End of the day at the Kansas City Renaissance Festival



Geographers in the Field

BRAD BAYS: Historic Barns of Oklahoma

Brad has been active in the area of historic preservation for the last few years. With funding from the National Park Service and the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office (OK/SHPO) Brad is completing Oklahoma's first-ever statewide thematic survey of historic barns. By May 2014 he will have surveyed all of Oklahoma's 77 counties. Brad uses historical GIS, aerial imagery, and GPS to locate historic barns, then photograph and record them for the Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory, the state's archive of the cultural landscape housed in the Oklahoma Historical Society. His reports are culminating in a cultural geography of Oklahoma barns, including an analysis of types, construction features, conditions, and their spatial patterns. Brad has also prepared three National Register nominations for barns he has recorded, and he intends to continue nominating many more over the next few decades. Oklahoma has a surprisingly rich tapestry of regional agricultural landscapes, each of which harbor layers of geographical evidence of people responding to technological advances and global economic forces.

Right: Close-up of corner-timbering utilizing full-dovetail notching on a single-crib log barn in Cherokee County. Northeastern Oklahoma overlaps the western lobe of the Ozark Plateau, and the Ozarks compose the westernmost province of the Upland South. Here, in the 1840s, Cherokee settlers reestablished their Upland Southern-influenced indigenous culture, which included Midland folk building techniques picked up a century earlier from Virginians and Carolinians. Scholars of American log construction agree that the more difficult building techniques tend to be confined to the core area of Midland log construction, namely a zone between the Delaware Valley and southern Appalachia. Far-flung peripheral areas like Cherokee County would not be expected to harbor complicated traits like full-dovetail notching. Nevertheless it exists, and indicates that skilled craftsmen resided in the area sometime in the past.



Left: The Bar-T Ranch Barn, Lincolnville vicinity, Ottawa County. This is a unique National Register-eligible property that follows the English Three-Bay Threshing Barn design. It is constructed of local limestone and contains numerous arches. Rather than using a balloon-frame design, this barn's superstructure has traditional timber beams that undoubtedly allowed it to survive a few close calls with tornadoes. Doors and windows are completely original, and it sports an attractive round roof, round hay bonnet, and cupola vent. This showpiece barn was completed in 1930 by a Miami attorney who succeeded in making an architectural statement just before losing his asset in the Great Depression.



Geographers in the Field

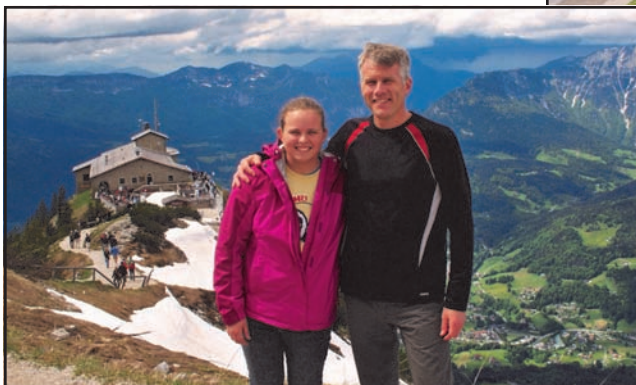
JON COMER: WWII Germany Study Abroad

Jon led a one-week Study Abroad trip on the “Historic Geography of WWII Germany” in May 2013. Steve and Barbara Stadler, as well as Geography MS alumni Keeley Heise, Yun Zhao, and Er Yue, were part of an OSU-based contingent of fourteen people (photo), although five of the travelers were from other institutions who found out about the trip from recruiting emails and signed up. After flying from Pittsburg to Frankfurt, Germany, a long bus ride (through Luxembourg) took the group to its first stop in Bastogne, Belgium, a main area of fighting in the Battle of the Bulge in 1944. After spending the night in Spa, Belgium, the group toured the Ardennes American Cemetery and Memorial before continuing on to Cologne, Germany for a few hours of sightseeing. A high-speed train then took the group to its home base for the next three nights, Berlin, including all the famous and some not-so-famous sights and sites (including Treptower Park, which houses a monumental Soviet war memorial in former East Berlin, photo). Next, the tour continued by bus towards Bavaria, stopping at Nuremberg and touring the Nazi Party Rally Grounds before spending the final three nights in Munich. A day trip included a tour of the Dachau concentration camp, and the trip ended with a bus trip to Salzburg, Austria and the Eagle’s Nest (Kehlsteinhaus) near Berchtesgaden (photo). The group departed from Munich, landing in Atlanta for connecting flights home.



Posing in front of the Bundestag Building in Berlin are (L-R; OSU unless noted otherwise): Ben Brownlee, Barbara Stadler, Er Yue, Yun Zhao, Steve Stadler, Nathan Kadavy, Scott Reuschel (Salt Lake City), Jacob Hamilton (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign), Kenneth Van Gorder (Indiana University of Pennsylvania), Keeley Heise, Jon Comer, Alex Comer, Alexis Reuschel (University of Alabama-Birmingham), and Lee May (Mississippi State University)

Soviet War Memorial in Treptower Park, eastern Berlin



Alex and Jon Comer at Eagle’s Nest (Kehlsteinhaus) in the Bavarian Alps



Geographers in the Field

CARLOS CORDOVA: A trip through Ciskei, Transkei, Natal, and Zululand.

This title sounds as if for a book about a safari in the 19th century. But it isn't. In December 2012, I returned to South Africa to complete the sampling of vegetation across two bioclimatic transects across southern Africa (Fig. 1). The east-west transect, done in 2008, extended from Port Nolloth (on the Atlantic Coast) to the Drakensberg Mountains. This December I completed it to Richard's Bay, on the Indian Ocean Coast. The coastal transect, was carried out to between 2008 and 2011 between the Cape to East London. This December I completed it to Richard's Bay. The completion of the two transects took me a bit over a week and right through the middle of the rainy season. But the interesting part is that sampling took me through one of the most interesting and enigmatic parts of South Africa, culturally and ecologically.

The cultural highlights of this trip included the Ciskei and Transkei, now part of the Eastern Cape Province, and the Province of KwaZulu-Natal. Ciskei and Transkei were two independent states created in the 1970s by the Apartheid government in the middle of the Xhosa homeland. They were ruled by a local dictator answering to the Apartheid Government in Pretoria. Along with Bophuthatswana, these two countries were part of a plan to segregate unwanted Blacks, a policy known as the Homelands or the Bantustans. Although technically independent states, Ciskei and Transkei were not recognized by the UN, or any other nation, except by South Africa and Israel. Yes, there was an Israeli embassy in Umthatha, the former capital of Transkei. But I am not sure if there was Transkeian representation in Tel Aviv. These petty states were dissolved and reintegrated to South Africa in 1994. Today, however, you still see where the boundaries are. Once you get into a poverty stricken territory, then you know that you have crossed the former border. Transkei has very impressive subtropical grasslands as shown in this view from the Nelson Mandela Memorial in Qunu (Fig. 2).

KwaZulu Natal is the most complex province of South Africa. The Executive and Judicial capital is Pietermaritzburg (former capital of Natal), and the parliamentary capital is Ulundi (former capital of the Zulu Kingdom). There is still a Zulu king; his name is Goodwill Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu, although his political role is more ceremonial. Let's say he has much less control on the provincial government than that of Queen Elizabeth on Britain. KwaZulu Natal (KZN), and particularly its largest city, Durban, have perhaps one of the largest Indian communities outside India. Indians in KZN are just one more spice to the Zulu, British, and Boer flavors. The national parks are another must-see highlight of KZN (Fig. 3).

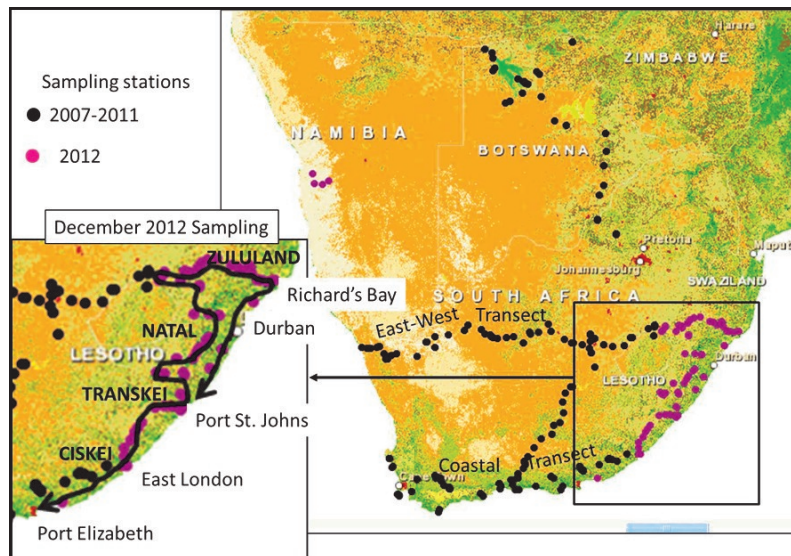


Figure 1. Map of the area sampled as of December 2012. Inset map shows the traveled area.

Geographers in the Field



Figure 2. View of the grasslands of the Transkei from the Nelson Mandel Memorial in Qunu, Transkei. The location of the hut where Nelson Mandela was born and grew up is marked with an arrow.



Figure 3. The Royal Natal National Park. View of the Drakensberg Mountains. This is the place where the movie Zulu (starring Michael Caine) was filmed. The real events represented in the movie did not occur here.



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Geographers in the Field

DALE LIGHTFOOT and JACQUELINE VADJUNEC: Morocco Study Abroad

In May 2013, Dale and Jackie led a group of students from Oklahoma State and Humboldt State University (California), along with non-student participants, on a two-week Study Abroad field course in Morocco. This third offering of The Cultural and Natural Resources of Morocco traveled from Casablanca through Rabat, the Roman city ruin of Volubilis, the artisan markets and historic sites of Fez, over the Atlas Mountains for three nights in a nomad-style tent encampment in the Sahara while exploring the traditional villages, historic sites, irrigation and agricultural practices of the Tafilat Oasis. A return route back to Casablanca took us past the Todra Gorge, the World Heritage Site of Ait Ben Haddou and other historic kasbahs of the Ouarzazate Valley, a couple of days in amazing Marrakech, and a day hiking through the High Atlas Mountains past traditional Berber highland villages. The trip was an amazing adventure with many unique experiences with a fun group who bonded as a family; the Tribe of Ait Khabbash.



Students Aanika Islam, Lauren Montalbano, and Hayley Hicks hiking near the Berber village of Armad in the High Atlas Mountains of Morocco.

REBECCA SHEEHAN:

Making Home “Under the Big Top”: Moving a Small Town Everyday and Wintering in Place



In this project, I explore “home” through the movement and moorings of circuses in Hugo, Oklahoma. Hugo is the winter quarters for three circuses. The circuses travel from approximately February to mid-October through at least five states, usually stopping for only two performances and one night at each town or city along the way. Though the road is “home,” Hugo is home too, and its Showman’s Rest, becomes the burial place for (circus) performers and workers from around the

world. Using oral histories from the Oral History Collections at Oklahoma State University, I examine how concepts of home (place) are created through representations and practices via points of arrival, departure, and connection by circus folks and discuss the implications to “the road” and Hugo.

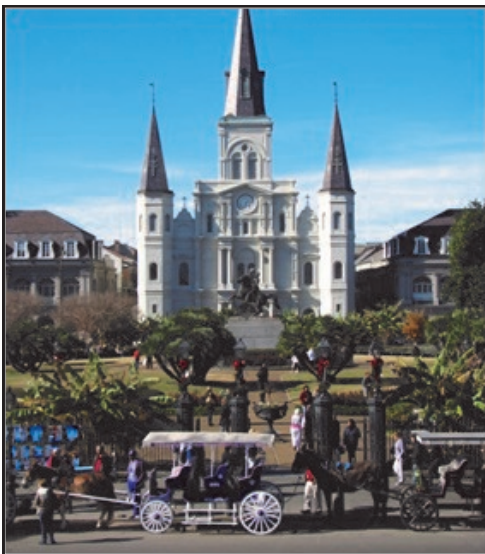


Geographers in the Field

REBECCA SHEEHAN (Continued):

Artists and Tourism in New Orleans's Jackson Square

In this paper using ethnographic data, I show ongoing negotiations in creating artists' identities in New Orleans's Jackson Square. I illustrate how artist identities are negotiated and authenticated by tourism which integrates art world discourses, art practices, and a particular historical geography of New Orleans and Jackson Square. In doing so, I also show broader exclusionary implications from these identifications, in and of place.



Jackson Square



Roller Derby Geographies in the Bible Belt

In this research, Dr. Vadjunec and I examined the Tornado Alley Roller Girls (TARG) with a focus on roller derby participants by considering its play, in both the sporting and ludic senses, as a serious social and spatial activity. In this manuscript, we demonstrate how practices associated with roller derby in TARG are revolutionary in that they complicate and sometimes (de)stabilize ideas and norms associated with gender and sexuality normativity.



Tornado Alley Roller Girls



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Geographers in the Field

JACQUELINE VADJUNEC: Land Use and Livelihoods in Chiapas, MX and High Plains in Oklahoma and New Mexico

What a busy summer! Travel highlights include co-teaching the Cultural and Natural Resources of Morocco field course with Dr. Dale Lightfoot, where I ate lots of vegetarian tagines and wandered through epic Saharan sand dunes by the light of the moon. I also spent 2 weeks in Chiapas, Mexico continuing my research with Dr. Dianne Rocheleau (CLARKU) on the socio-environmental impacts of California carbon trading policies on traditional people in Mexico. Lastly, I spent the end of the summer in Cimarron, OK and Union, NM counties with Dr. Todd Fagin (OU) and PhD student Amy Graham, talking to ranchers and agriculturalists about the impacts of drought on their land-use and livelihoods. Fieldwork can be tough, but we caught some awesome sunsets, and even a double rainbow! All in all, it was a great field season!

Jackie outside a shrine in Rabat, Morocco



Above: Visit to “sustainable” rural mountain city in Chiapas, Mexico



Kenton, OK sunset



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Geographers in the Field

DALE LIGHTFOOT and TOM WIKLE: The UNESCO-Protected Slave Trading Sites of West Africa

In June 2013, Dale and Tom traveled through the West African countries of Senegal, The Gambia, and Guinea-Bissau for adventure and research while exploring the historic slave trading sites protected and interpreted by UNESCO. Each of these countries was established by competing colonial interests—French (Senegal), British (The Gambia) and Portuguese (Guinea-Bissau) interests—which has shaped the languages spoken and traditions visible on the landscape. Many days were spent driving the countryside, taking river boats, sampling the cities and walking through traditional villages to talk to local people to better understand the similarities and differences between these countries. We focused many visits on the UNESCO-protected historic sites associated with slave-trading activities, and a manuscript drawn from this fieldwork has been completed and accepted for publication. As part of this research we visited museums dedicated to interpreting the slave and slave-trading experience and visited former British and French sites involved in both the exploitation of slaves and the enforcement of abolition.



Approaching tiny James Island in the Gambia River, one of the first European trade routes into Africa. From this island the British could control movement on the river. For more than a hundred years, beginning in the 1660s, the British operated a fortified slave holding facility on James Island.



In 1807 the British outlawed slavery and began enforcing abolition by capturing slave ships off Africa's western coastline. Recognizing that a site near the mouth of the Gambia River offered a superior location to control river access, British military planners constructed a fortification on the north bank of the river mouth. This new facility—Fort Bullen—proved effective in the British abolition campaign.



In 1677 the French captured Gorée Island—off the coast of what is now Dakar, Senegal—from the Dutch and began organizing slave trade activities there. This photo shows the courtyard of Maison des Esclaves (House of Slaves), the most famous slave site in Senegal in spite of the dubious authenticity of the house as a slave holding facility. After the abolition of slavery by the French in 1848, the island was used as a French naval base for stopping illegal slavery.



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Departmental Gatherings

2012 Christmas Party



2013 Halloween Party



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Alumni Homecoming Reception

The OSU Geography Department hosted a 2013 Homecoming Reception for alumni, families and friends on Friday, October 18th in the Murray Hall parlor. We had a nice turn out despite the cold, misty weather. Out-of-town alumni included Karen and Mike Morgan; Jason Veale; John and Audrey Stadler; and Keith and Mona Hendrickson.



Left: (L-R) Steve Tweedie, Alyson Greiner, Karen Morgan, Steve Stadler, and Dale Lightfoot



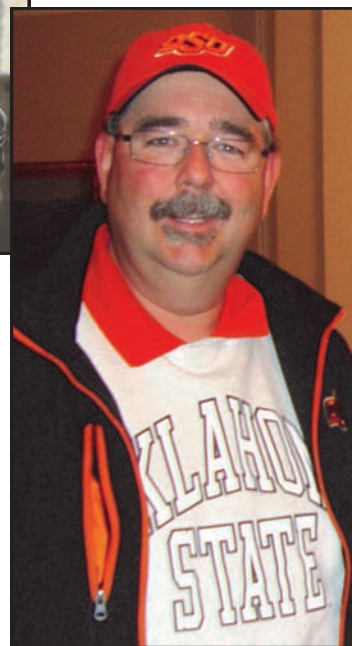
Top: Alyson Greiner and Keith Hendrickson



Right: Charles Fairbanks was with us in spirit.



Left: Audrey and John Stadler



Right: Jason Veale



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2013 Visitors

In addition to the many friends and alumni of OSU Geography who visited during Homecoming in October 2013, several former students and friends of the department also came to visit since we last published the Zenith.

Jerry Croft (Professor Emeritus) traveled from Iowa in February 2013 to have lunch, share memories, and meet with a Foundation officer about the Croft and Family Award in Geography Education.

Tadashi Kyuno, who participated in our epic 1995 study abroad field course driving a university van from Stillwater to Honduras and back, visited in May 2013 while on assignment in Oklahoma City with the Japan Broadcasting Corporation.

Ryan Sigworth (M.S. 2004) visited the department in June 2013 while he was in Oklahoma to see his family.

Teresa Harris (B.S. 1981) visited in July 2013. Teresa retired from the Oklahoma Department of Transportation Right of Way Division last year and began a new right of way job at the Texas Department of Transportation in the Lufkin (TX) District.

Shireen Hyrapiet (Ph.D. 2012) visited in late August 2013, shortly before the new semester began at Oregon State University where she is Instructor in the Department of Geography.

Dr. Yi Chao, a visiting scholar from China hosted by Hongbo Yu, worked with the Department of Geography during the 2012-2013 school year.

Chip Whipple (M.S. 1999) stopped by to visit in October 2013.

Alumni News & Memories

Patrick Briley (B.S. 1986): I assumed the role of Director, Army Reserve Installation Management Directorate, Washington DC in Feb 2013 after serving two years as Director of Public Works in the Southeast US covering nine states and Puerto Rico. In this current position, I am responsible for a \$1.1 billion budget, all infrastructure, maintenance and sustainment, military construction, and all installation support for all Army Reserve Installations and over 1200 Army Reserve Centers throughout the world. I have a large staff located in Washington DC as well as one at Fort Bragg, NC. I currently make my home in northern Virginia with my wife Stacy, whom I met at OSU (Tumbleweeds) and two daughters. My son Zachary is a recent graduate of Liberty University and is now employed at West Texas A&M University.



Colonel Patrick Briley
US Army
Washington DC



Dennis Chappabitty (B.S. 1972) lives in Elk Grove, CA and practices federal and Indian law. He has been a member of the Oklahoma Bar Association since 1982. He is general legal counsel for the Benton Paiute Tribe located in the remote high desert south of Mono Lake in the Eastern Sierra Region of California.

This picture of Dennis was taken at the Comanche Nation SIA bird sanctuary in Cyril, OK. Dennis is nationally known as Indian George Hamilton. He got this title from the Crow Tribe while doing a criminal case involving 27 co-defendants in Billings, MT in 1989.

Alumni News & Memories

Brett Chloupek (M.S. 2007): After graduating from Oklahoma State, I attended the University of Kansas where I completed a Ph.D. in Geography and was awarded a David L. Boren Fellowship to conduct dissertation research abroad for one year in the Slovak Republic. I worked briefly in the geography departments at Kansas State University and the University of Nebraska at Kearney. I am now an Assistant Professor of Geography at Northwest Missouri State University in Maryville, MO. My wife Sylvia and I have a 16 month old daughter named Vilhelmina.

Tom Daxon (M.S. 1977): I enjoy getting the Zenith each year and have often intended to share something for “Alumni News & Memories.” It is fun to hear about new students, faculty and projects as well as tidbits about some of my faculty, who are all at least partially retired. I liked seeing the pics of George Carney in San Antonio and Steve Tweedie’s new home; reading of Keith Harries’ Madrid project, Jerry Croft’s visit to OSU, Dick Hecock’s oversight of a watershed district and thinking of those who have left us like Paul Hagle, Bob Norris, and Jim Stine. All were dedicated to advancing geography and all helped me learn some of it. I’m grateful to each one. The contributions from other alums were enjoyable, too. They had panty raids at Murray Hall in the early 50’s?!? I’d have never guessed!

About the best story I can contribute concerns John Rooney, another dedicated professional who was very kind to me. I had graduated from OSU with a degree in economics in 1970, but I took 15 hours or so of geography, and, thanks to Jim Stine, I especially took to economic geography. However, I must also confess that I was a very lazy student and on academic probation through my junior year. I decided to turn things around the first semester of my senior year. I began attending class, taking notes, doing homework and studying. I even participated in class discussions. I made all A’s that semester. Dr. Rooney had just arrived at OSU as the new department head and was developing his work in sports geography. I took his class, liked it and liked Rooney.

However, trying to move my career forward a few years later, I was advised to consider graduate school. I was really interested in logistics and transportation, so I decided to pursue a master’s degree in geography. I was already past all the deadlines, however, and I knew I would need some help to get a deadline or two waived. Of course, there was no one better for this than Dr. Rooney.

If you wanted a “take charge” type from central casting, you’d get John Rooney. I told him I’d like to apply for graduate school and knew I was way past the deadlines but I didn’t want to wait another semester. Could he help me? Fortunately, I had pushed the Rooney action button. He looked at me reassuringly, handed me some forms and said firmly, “sit right there and fill these out.” He then yelled out to his assistant to “get the dean” on the phone.

As I sat in his office filling out the forms, his assistant reached the dean, and the conversation went like this, “Rooney here. Got a young man in my office we need to get into graduate school next week and I need your help.” “Yes, his degree is from OSU.” “Yes, he’s filling that out now and we’ll get it to you.” “Oh, excellent student! *Excellent* student! *No* need to check that, I’ll vouch for him.”

My conscience hit panic mode! What should I say? Perhaps something like, “Ah..., Dr. Rooney, I did do well in *your* class but I took other classes in which I didn’t do as well and you might want to check into that before you get too far out on that limb.” But then Rooney was off the phone and told me to hurry to some other office right then. No time for chit-chat, thankfully.

I thought I had a chance to get in, but I knew I’d start on academic probation. Fortunately, I did well in my classes and the subject never came up. I eventually got my degree. However, that was when the “Arabs” hit us with the oil embargo. Except for pipelines, everyone in transportation was laying off, not hiring. I had taken a few accounting courses to help my job prospects and stayed an extra semester to get enough accounting to sit for the CPA exam, the profession that would become my career.

While I’ve made my living as a CPA, my geography studies helped in many ways, often giving me a unique perspective on problems I encountered. My training in geography taught me to analyze things spatially, especially valuable in business and government.



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Alumni News & Memories

Ed Felts (Ph.D. Env.Sc. 1997): I taught Geography and Political Science for 10 years at NWOsu. I have been retired for five years. I'm still living on my ½ acre arboretum/gardens, and I just returned from a 10-day backpacking and back country camping trip to Olympic National Park (WOW!!). I remember the kindness of everyone there at OSU, especially Tom Wikle. Hello to him and to all.

Chris Gore relocated to Kilgore in the Piney Woods of East Texas. Situated in the heart of the historic East Texas Oil Field, Kilgore is home to the World's Richest Acre and Kilgore College. At the college, Chris directs the Office of New Student Relations where he oversees academic recruitment and manages all aspects of international student services. His KC colleagues enjoy his homemade office snacks almost as much as the OSU Geography Department. Chris misses the faculty and friends at OSU and wishes everyone a successful year.

Clifton Hall (B.S. 2012): I have been admitted to study Urban Planning at the University of Kansas and have been given a GRA position with the KU Transportation Research Institute.

Pamela (Skraastad) Journey (M.S. 2006): Since Pamela left the department in the summer of 2007, she has found herself working in the world of tribal transportation. Her career first started with road inventory and has evolved into the environmental compliance side of road and bridge projects. At the first of June (2013), Pamela joined a start-up company called Cross Timbers Consulting, LLC. Cross Timbers specializes in long range planning, road inventory, road and bridge design, and environmental compliance, primarily for Indian tribes.

In addition to the environmental compliance work, Pamela develops and teaches ArcGIS Basic Training courses. Since August 2012, she has taught a class nearly every month through Oklahoma SCAUG (South Central Arc Users Group) or the Southern Plains TTAP (Tribal Technical Assistance Program). She has also exclusively trained ODOT personnel as the state transportation department introduces ArcGIS into various departments. Oklahoma SCAUG is the ArcGIS resource hub for the state, and is a sub-chapter of the greater SCAUG region. In March 2013, she was named the SCAUG Founder's Award recipient for her efforts in extending geospatial knowledge to an ever-growing user community at an affordable price. Below is a picture from the SCAUG regional conference. Pictured with Pamela (center) is Scott Sires, founder of SCAUG, and Shellie Willoughby of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission, vice-president of SCAUG, and former OSU Geography Alumna. Pamela resides in Edmond with her husband and two daughters, Tulle (7) and Talla (2). She can be contacted at Pamela.Journey@crosstimbersconsulting.com.



Alumni News & Memories

Mark Miller (M.S. 1972): I recently retired after a 35+ year career in the financial services/banking industry, and as my wife, Susan, said..."it took you all of 1 1/2 hours to get used to being retired". So far so great! Lots of golf and lots of volunteer work keep me plenty busy. I think I am actually more highly "scheduled" than when I was employed!

I was also recently elected to the Presidency of the University of North Texas Alumni Association. After serving on the board for five years and serving one year as President-Elect, I, somehow, was elected to the Presidency for this year. I am looking forward to the challenge of building and expanding the Alumni Associations reach for this 33,000 student university. Should keep me somewhat busy.

On the family side, both our son and daughter-in-law have been promoted to Lt. Commander in the US Navy medical corps. They are both completing residencies in San Diego, and my wife and I spend lots of time in San Diego riding herd over their two young sons, ages 1 and 3.

We are also looking forward to returning to Stillwater this year to root for the Cowboys and to catch up with friends...and to perhaps twist Dr. Rooney's arm into a game of golf. We all know how hard that is to do!

Anyway, it doesn't get much better than this retired thing...so far anyway!

Hope to see folks in Stillwater soon! Go Pokes!

Karen Morgan (B.S. 1985, M.S. 1987): I've been Retired nearly three years from my work as CEO for the Girl Scouts of Eastern Oklahoma. I stay busy enough to make life challenging. However..., and then you will understand what I mean: our oldest daughter, Misha, was diagnosed with a Grade IV Brain Cancer in April. Her amazing love and spirit gave us strength to be there for her every minute of the four-month fight. So to you, my dear friends in Geography, hold your children close and never take it for granted that you'll precede them in death. My other challenge has been a total knee replacement surgery from which I am recuperating. Oh my! This is another challenge that I wouldn't wish on anybody, but we are getting there. Husband Mike has been my rock as well as my nursemaid. My other areas of "busy" include being a Group Leader for Bible Study Fellowship and an active Rotarian. I've three grandchildren in college and the other five are brilliant and on course to greatness, no kidding. Next time the Zenith rolls around I hope to have better news but for now, this is a wrap!! Email is watershipdown3@cox.net

Lee North (B.S. 2000) graduated from the US Army Command and General Staff College in June of 2013. Lee is married with two children. While deployed to Iraq in 2007 he finished a M.A. in adult education from Touro University International. He is currently a Major in the US Army studying strategic planning and national security policy at the School of Advanced Military Studies, Fort Leavenworth, KS.

Mark Okrant (Ed.D. 1975) continues to thrive during his half-time retirement from faculty duties at Plymouth State (NH) University. Using principles from his sixth book, *No Vacancy: The Rise, Demise, and Reprise of America's Motels*, Mark is working with a group of owners of 1950s-60s era properties to develop a Retrotour, with the objective of increasing visitation. "While the names have been changed, the principles I employ are right out of Tweedie, Hecock, Harries, and Rooney," he says. Should any of his former mentors seek compensation, Mark is willing to send a list of participating motels, theme parks, and diners.



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Alumni News & Memories

Gail Pickens-Barger (B.S. 1981): I've been retired from DuPont for several years now—did information technology work for them. Prior to that, I worked for Conoco in the Exploration Research and International Exploration Departments, where I worked with computer mapping software analysis programs and taught geophysicists and geologists how to use the mapping software. I am currently teaching for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Adaptive Chair Yoga. I was wearing my OSU ring in a store the other day (and in Texas of course, Aggie Rings are the thing), and someone asked if I was an Aggie—I told them I was an OAMC Aggie! I have four kids, and I tried to get two of them to go to OSU, but they chose A&M and UT. Talk about a divided household! Maybe my 7-year-old will go to OSU?

Jess Porter (Ph.D. 2007) is in his fifth year as Assistant Professor and Coordinator of Geography at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR). This year his third workbook in the Encounter Geography series was published by Pearson. Next door neighbor and fellow OSU Geography alum Steve O'Connell is co-author of *Encounter Physical Geography: Interactive Explorations of Earth Using Google Earth*. The pair are now working on the final book in the series, *Encounter Meteorology*. Jess continues to do research on the Dust Bowl. He published an article in *Population and Environment* and has dedicated much of the year to preparing a National Endowment for the Humanities-funded traveling exhibit on the Dust Bowl. *Dust, Drought, and Dreams Gone Dry* will tour the country in 2014-15 with Dr. Porter serving as the project curator. Jess stays busy as a stand-alone geographer at UALR, teaching 12 different courses on a two-year rotation. He and a UALR colleague will take a group of students to China in early 2014 as part of a History and Geography of China course. Most importantly, the Porter family (Leslie, Claire (10) and Abbie (8)) remain healthy and happy.

Michal Shaw (B.S. 2002, M.S. 2006): I'm enjoying life with my family of four in Stillwater, Oklahoma. While pursuing my graduate degree, I met my husband, Wade, and we've since had two beautiful children – Henry (age 5) and Sam (age 3). I am currently serving as the Senior Director of Compliance and Stewardship at the OSU Foundation. I've worked in a number of capacities at the Foundation for the last nine years. When I'm not drafting endowment agreements for scholarship donors or using the skills I learned in Dr. Comer's Spatial Analysis course to run scholarship utilization reports, I can usually be found at the OSU Botanical Garden with my boys or planning our next family National Park excursion. A highlight from the last year includes seeing my first bull moose (on my bucket list) in Yellowstone National Park. Best wishes and regards to former geography alumni and faculty.

My first bull moose sighting on the Yellowstone River. A dream come true!



Ediz Unal (M.S. 1998): After graduating from OSU Geography in 1998, I completed my doctoral study in the Soil Science Dept. of Ankara University in 2011. I am still working at the GIS & Remote Sensing Center of Crop Fields Research Institute in Ankara, Turkey. I have just come back to my position after a three-month trip in the Netherlands as a visiting scientist at Twente University, ITC Faculty. My wife still runs her own dental clinic, and my daughter is 13-years-old and continuing her education at "Yuce College".

Alumni News & Memories

Cecile Valastro (M.S. 2000): Greetings from Oregon! Doug and I have had some challenging times over the last several years. The bad economic times have kept Doug from a permanent steady job for the last several years with him being laid off multiple times but he continues to work currently as a contractor for Intel. I had a **freak** accident this past March while hiking in the Columbia River Gorge. I slipped and fell and hit myself in the mouth with a trekking pole. It shattered one of my front teeth and chipped two others. I am now sporting a new implant. Lesson learned: Don't use trekking poles or close mouth when you fall!!!!

As far as my work life goes I have been teaching online geography classes for the University of Wyoming Outreach Credit Programs and Laredo Community College Distance Education Department for the last 9 years. I was employed by the University of Wyoming part of those years as an Office Assistant Senior and started teaching while working there.

The news is not all bad. This past year I contacted Dr. Lightfoot to offer my services to the Geography department as an adjunct instructor. Dr. Lightfoot was very kind and has allowed me to teach an online class this past year called Natural Hazards and Risk. This Fall its name has changed to Natural Hazards and Society. The class has been going well and I am looking forward to continue teaching it again this Fall and in the future and possibly adding more classes as well. We also took a week off last September and went camping at Crater Lake National Park (with my laptop in tow because classes had already started). What an amazing place to visit and see. You can't imagine how blue the water really is until you see it in person. We had a great time hiking and camping that week. I am looking forward to this year's adventure. We are going to Redwood National Park in September (again with the computer in tow to stay in touch with students) and swing back by Crater Lake National Park on the way back home. My bucket list includes visiting every Western National Park in the U.S. (one or two each year).

I am still volunteering at the Oregon Zoo and the Audubon Society of Portland. I participate in caring for the animals in our program and teaching people about wildlife and birds of prey in particular at the zoo. At Audubon I work in the animal hospital taking care of sick and injured wildlife (mostly birds). I also participate in education programs at Audubon as well.

I enjoy reading the Zenith but I haven't had the opportunity to come back to visit Stillwater and the Department but I am hoping someday I will be able to do that. I hope everyone is well.

Take Care!
Cecile
cmvalastro@hotmail.com

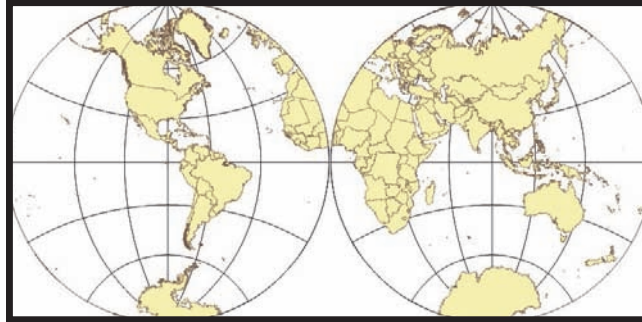


Doug Williamson and
Cecile Valastro at Crater
Lake National Park



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The mission of the Department of Geography is to advance geography instruction, research and outreach, to promote and maintain a growing statewide workforce skilled in geographic research and applications. We strive to achieve national and international stature in scholarly and creative activities to enhance the visibility and desirability of the geography program at Oklahoma State University. We plan to capitalize on new opportunities and respond to the changing needs of Oklahomans and society to provide Oklahoma schools, university, industries and businesses, and those in the surrounding region, with the highest caliber professionals in the field of geography.