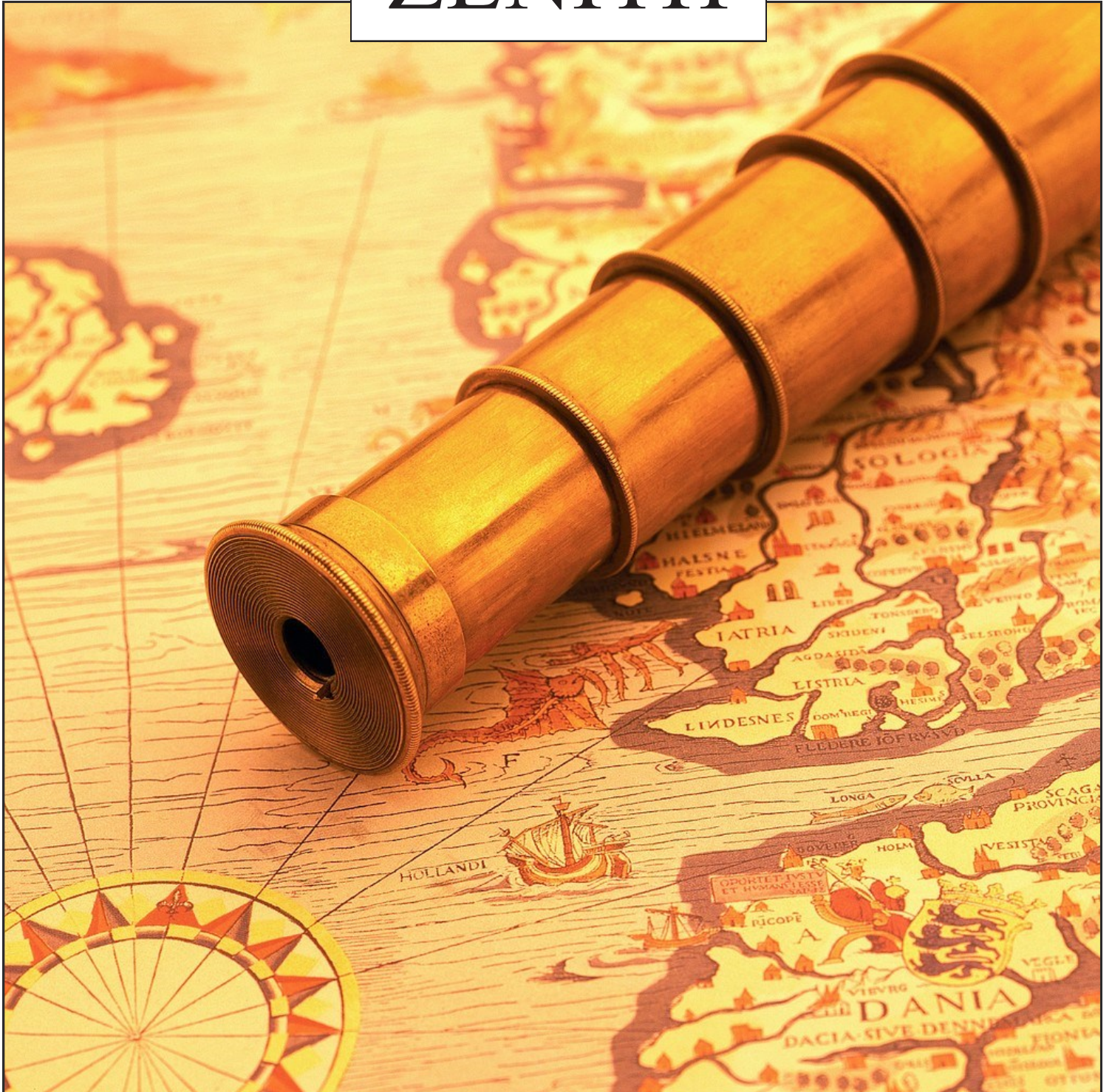




# ZENITH



2015

Department of Geography



The OSU Zenith is a publication of Oklahoma State University, College of Arts and Sciences, Department of Geography.  
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# A LETTER FROM THE HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT

Dear alumni and friends of Geography,

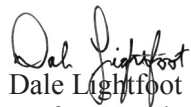
Another year has passed and another *Zenith* has arrived, offering another opportunity to keep tabs on your Department of Geography, to see faces old and new, and to hear news from our faculty, staff, students, friends and alumni. I enjoyed working on this magazine and seeing it all come together. I know that you will enjoy it, too.

After the departure of April Chipman in the spring, Clay Barrett (MS 2015; page 5) joined the department to supervise projects and students assigned with the AAPG work being conducted in Cartography Services. Several new faculty members joined our department prior to the new school year and no one left, so our Geography family continues to grow. Two Research Assistant Professors, Hung-Ling (Stella) Liu and I-Chun (Nicky) Wu (pages 8 and 11) moved to Geography from another college to continue work on the Resource Management Plan-Geographic Information System Project supported by the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department (Oklahoma State Parks). Moving with Nicky and Stella were Tannaz Soltani, a post-doctoral Fellow, and two graduate research assistants. New Clinical Assistant Professor and Undergraduate Advisor Emily Fekete (page 6) completed her Ph.D. at the University of Kansas and joined us in August, and we are in the process of hiring another new faculty member to begin fall 2016.

Many accomplishments are reflected in the pages of this magazine, and a few of these really stand out. We were very pleased to select Emily Ellis and Taylor Iberosi to work on research projects with Drs. Mathews and Hanks as part of our Foundation-funded Geography Mentors Program. Reuel Hanks was named to a Dan and Cathey Humphreys Chair in International Studies, our first faculty member to receive an endowed chair position. Geography masters student Lauren Wood and doctoral student Matt Haffner received scholarships with the South Central Arc User Group regional competition at the SCAUG meeting in Oklahoma City, and undergraduates Emily Ellis and Nick Deyoe each received an inaugural SST Software Scholarship. The OAMC Dairy Barn is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places after a successful nomination by doctoral student Thomas Craig. Carlos Cordova and Ph.D. student Tom Cox raised the visibility of Geography when they were selected for the cover of the 2014 Arts & Sciences magazine to headline a story about their research efforts with the Helena Mammoth, which currently resides in the department.

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

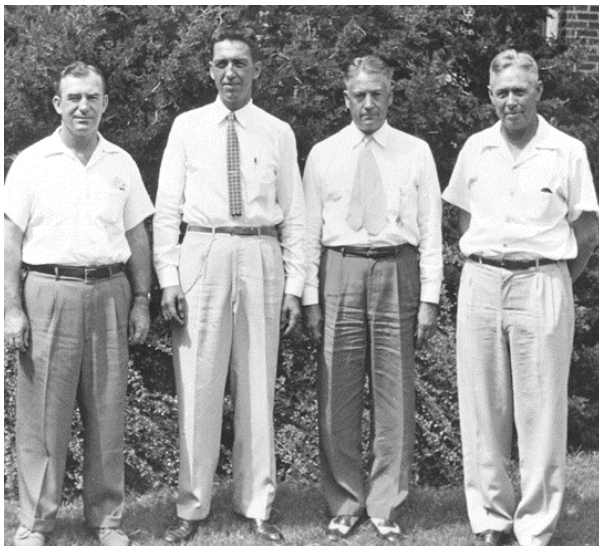
# BLAST FROM THE PAST



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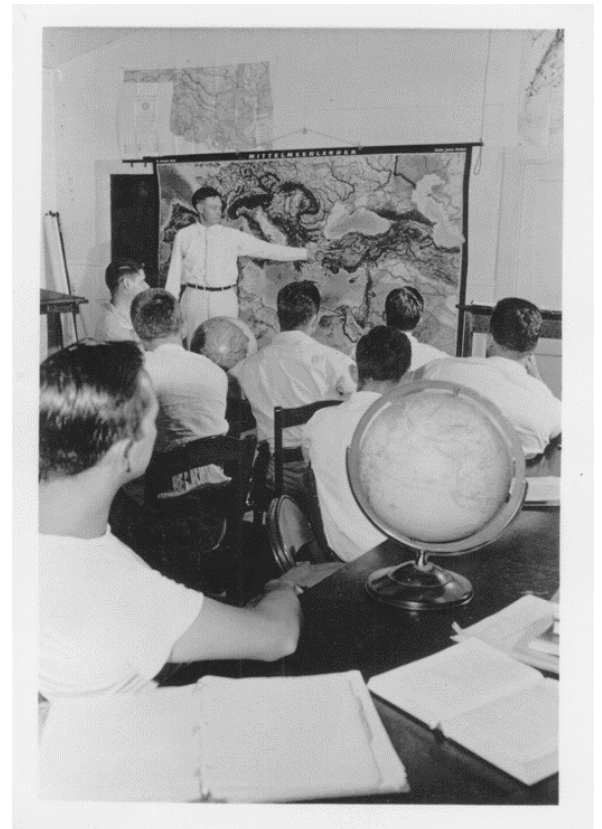


Steve Stadler, Steve Tweedie, and George Carney in the Geography Building (then called Home Economics East/HEE; now demolished), ca. 1985



Geography faculty (from left) Ralph Birchard, Robert Fite, David Winslow, Edward Keso, ca. 1950

Edward Keso lecturing in geography class in the old pre-fab geography building (pre-HEE), ca. 1946



# AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

## Geography Scholarship Priorities 2016

THANK YOU to the many donors who contributed to our Excellence and Scholarship funds over the past year. Your contribution is helpful, needed, and has a direct impact on the faculty and students in our Department of Geography.

### New Planned Gift

A new agreement has been signed to create the Mark and Susan Miller Scholarship Award in Geography with a planned gift from Mark and Susan Miller. This award will be used to support outstanding Masters students in Geography. Mark is a 1972 Masters graduate of Geography at Oklahoma State and worked for more than 35 years in the banking and financial services industry in Texas. Mark and Susan live in Denton, Texas.

### Geography Scholarship Priorities in 2016

Past alumni support has been a key to the progress of our department. With growth in the number of faculty and new program developments, it's an exciting time for the Department. I hope you can help us maintain this momentum by making a generous contribution to our programs. Your gift of \$25, \$50, \$100 or \$1,000 will assist us in making improvements that will benefit current students and enhance the department and your degree in geography. Please make checks payable to the OSU Foundation and designate the fund to which you are donating on the memo line. Every dollar sent to one of these Geography funds goes directly to the Geography Department. Your support will help the Department achieve its goals of enriching the academic experience of current and future students.

We hope to receive funding in the future to:

- Establish an annual scholarship for the Outstanding Senior in Geography
- Establish an Endowed Professorship in the Department of Geography
- Enhance the Alyson L. Greiner Undergraduate Travel Scholarship
- Finish endowing the Stephen W. Tweedie Travel Scholarship
- Support the Geography Excellence Fund which provides many activities for students and faculty



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# AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

## Geography Mentors Program

This program, in its second year, allows undergraduate students to work closely with a selected faculty mentor on research. Students are selected through a competitive process and work with a faculty member on a specific research project. The students enroll for 3 credit hours in an independent study course in the fall semester, and the mentor and student then co-present the research at a nearby conference. The student performs the bulk of the presentation. The department covers the student's registration fee, transportation (via OSU van), and hotel costs. This year two undergraduate geographers are involved:



Emily Ellis



Taylor Iberosi

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### 2015-16 Academic Year Awardees:

Norris Conference Travel Award (4 @ \$500 each)  
Elizabeth Armstrong, Jordan Brasher,  
Thomas Craig, and Stephanie Heald

Norris Field Research Award (3 @ \$1,500 each)  
Samayita Bandyopadhyay, Thomas Craig, and Brian Gilson

Greiner Travel Scholarship (1 @ \$500)  
Ryan Conner

### 2014-15 Academic Year Awardees:

Rooney Scholarship for Outstanding Junior (\$2,000)  
Avonlea Keenen

A&S Outstanding Senior  
Emily Ellis

Norris Scholarship for Outstanding 1st Year Master's Student (\$2,000)  
Jordan Brasher

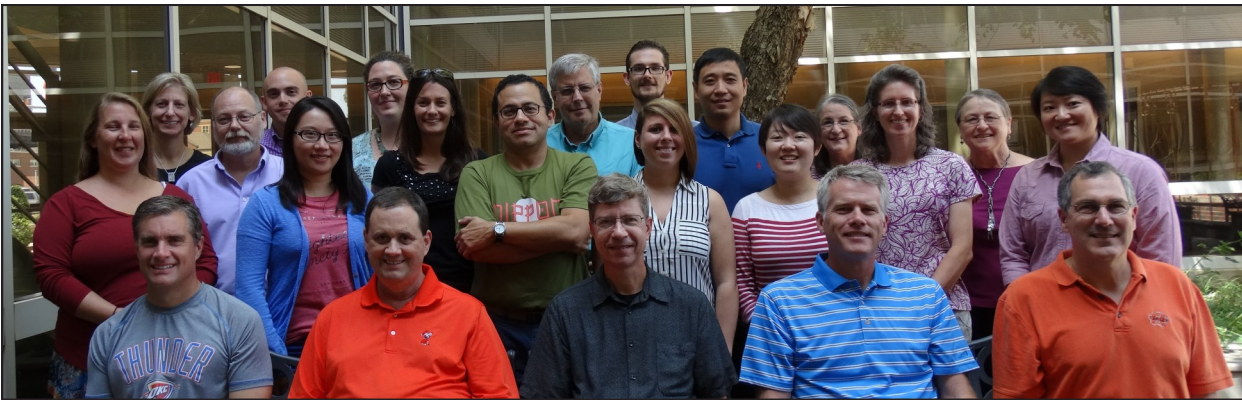
Fite Scholarship for Outstanding 1st Year Ph.D. Student (\$2,000)  
Matthew Haffner

Shaull Medal for Teaching Excellence (\$500)  
Matthew Haffner

Croft Family Award in Geographic Education (\$1,300)  
Thomas Craig



# STAFF AND FACULTY NEWS



**Standing (L-R):** Nicole Colston, Rebecca Sheehan, Michael Larson, Adam Mathews, Stella Liu, Jacqueline Vadjunec, Amy Frazier, Carlos Cordova, Stephen Stadler, Clay Barrett, Emily Fekete, Hongbo Yu, Jing Wang, Emily Williams, Alyson Greiner, Ann Adkins, and Nicky Wu.

**Seated (L-R):** Brad Bays, Allen Finchum, Dale Lightfoot, Jon Comer, and Tom Wikle

**ANN ADKINS** just completed her fifth year in the Department of Geography. In her spare time, she keeps busy with her hobbies (mainly Scrabble and photography). In August, she was able to attend the National Scrabble Tournament in Reno, where she improved her Scrabble rating slightly. After the tournament, she rented a car and drove over to San Francisco for a few days and played tourist.

**CLAY BARRETT** is an OSU alum with a MS in Geography and a BS in Environmental Sciences, both from Oklahoma State University. Following defense of his thesis in April, he started work at OSU Cartography Services as the GIS Specialist overseeing the American Association of Petroleum Geologists projects. His professional interests are in scripting with Python to automate repetitive tasks in ArcMap and finding other ways to work smarter. Clay lives on a small acreage in the country with his wife and son, Marga and Xavier. In his free time he enjoys gaming with his son and chopping wood.

**DR. BRAD BAYS** has lately worked to champion engaged learning and scholarship among faculty in the College of Arts & Sciences and to develop a system to document faculty engagement activity. In the Spring of 2015 OSU received the Engagement Classification awarded by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Over the next five years, Brad's system will document the A&S faculty's engaged research and service learning efforts that will provide documentary evidence for the university's reapplication for the Carnegie classification. Brad continues a long-term interest in applied historical geography by using GIS in conjunction with historical maps (HGIS) and aerial photos to identify and document cultural resources in rural areas for preservation planning. He consults for individuals and non-profit organizations to develop nominations to the National Register of Historic Places, and has provided expert witness testimony based on his research. Brad is working to integrate new geospatial technologies to improve the efficiency and accuracy of preservationists' approaches to field data collection. He is also producing publications from his recent statewide survey of historic barns. Brad serves on the boards of the National Barn Alliance, a nonprofit preservation group, and the International Society for Landscape, Place, and Material Culture, an academic organization composed primarily of cultural geographers and preservationists. Brad's wife, Sharon Bays, works for Northern Oklahoma College. Their daughter Lydia is a junior majoring in fashion design at LSU, and their son Luke is a freshman who performs on the drum line for the Stillwater High School marching band. Brad is training for his first marathon (at age 49) in Dallas in December of 2015.

**DR. NICOLE COLSTON:** I am getting ready to visit the University of Nebraska Lincoln (UNL) for two weeks in October to conduct interviews with scientists engaged in research and outreach related to drought. I am excited to learn more about the wide variety of efforts to help communities adapt to drought in the High Plains region. I will also present at the UNL STEM Education Research Retreat, as well as attend the Rural Futures Institute Conference with the theme "Hope Inspires Vision." I am also proud to announce the publication of two articles from my dissertation work, including a piece in Geoforum co-authored with my mentor Jackie Vadjunec titled, "A critical political ecology of consensus: On "Teaching Both Sides" of climate change controversies" available at: <http://authors.elsevier.com/a/1Rcvy3pIL9TjP>.



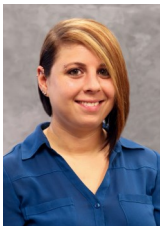
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# STAFF AND FACULTY NEWS

**DR. JON COMER** had another busy travel year during 2014-15. He went to Albuquerque for SWAAG and Atlanta for Applied Geography Conferences in October 2014, Chicago for AAG in April 2015, and led an 11-day study abroad trip to Eastern Europe (Budapest, Krakow, Prague, and Vienna) in May 2015 with Tom Wikle. While in Stillwater, Jon maintained his usual load of teaching, graduate advising, service, and publishing. Family-wise, daughter Alex graduated from OSU with a BS in Business Management with a double major in marketing and management. Wife Shannon still enjoys teaching first grade at Sangre Ridge Elementary School.

**DR. CARLOS CORDOVA** was on sabbatical leave in the Fall 2014. He returned to his teaching/service duties in the Spring 2015. He taught his usual Intro to Physical Geography, Geoarchaeology and Environmental History, and as if that was not enough, he taught Biogeography online. In the summer of 2015, he traveled to Mexico, Jordan, and Japan. In Jordan he worked on an archaeological and paleoecological project funded by the Canadian government. Among other things he is doing the reconstruction of the landscape of the Azraq basin for different times in the Paleolithic. In Japan he participated in the Congress of the International Quaternary Association (INQUA) in Nagoya. On his way back to the states he spent some time in Honolulu visiting Pearl Harbor. In September 2015 Carlos attended a meeting in Astrakhan, Russia. The meeting was part of a UNESCO-funded project to exchange ideas and research on the Mediterranean-Black Sea-Caspian Corridor. On his way in and out, he stopped in Moscow to gain more ideas for his future novel, *What Stalin didn't know*. The novel is part of a series of novels encased one in the next, a Carlos-invented genre he calls *matrioshka*-series stories. Matrioshkas are the well-known Russian nesting dolls. In the literary sense, one short novel is part of another larger novel, and subsequently so.



**EMILY FEKETE:** I am excited to be a new member of the Department of Geography at Oklahoma State University! This past year I completed my PhD under the direction of Barney Warf at the University of Kansas. I moved to Stillwater in mid-July with Kevin and our black cat, Mulligan, and we are settling in well. In terms of research, my dissertation focused on Social Media sites and how data from these can be used to study consumption patterns, urban economic development, and the changing nature of business owner/customer relationships. I have recently published two articles out of my dissertation, one in the *Southeastern Geographer* and a second in *Geographical Review*. I have also contributed to a new edited volume on big data due out later this year. Other research I have conducted this year looks at the nebulous nature of cyberwar and cyberterrorist events, primarily in the Middle East. A paper on cyberwar is set to be published in *CyberOrient* and a paper co-authored with Barney Warf on cyberterrorism is due to be printed in *Space and Polity*. In June I was able to take a trip back to my hometown of Rochester, NY and was asked to present my research on American Sign Language at the International Conference on Deaf Geographies. I am looking forward to the growth in this area of geography and the potential to collaborate with scholars at the Rochester Institute of Technology in the future. My new position at OSU also involves being the undergraduate advisor and being responsible for the promotion of the geography department. I have enjoyed getting to know the great group of undergraduate students we currently have in the department as well as work towards increasing OSU Geography's presence online and on campus. Feel free to send me a message through our new social media sites on Facebook at OSU Geography Department or on Twitter @geographyOSU or Instagram at OSUgeography.

**DR. ALLEN FINCHUM:** During 2014-15 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 Mike Larson gives to the SHPO project and its' ongoing success. One of the more personal projects is an analysis of cell phone usage by operating system for select US cities in relation to other demographic patterns. He presented a poster on the cell phone analysis at the AAG Meeting in Chicago with Matt Haffner. During the Summer of 2015 Allen spent two weeks in Boston on personal business.





# STAFF AND FACULTY NEWS

**DR. AMY FRAZIER** is part of a multi-institution, collaborative research team that was recently awarded a grant from the National Science Foundation for \$6M to study the use of unmanned aerial systems (UAS) for meteorology and atmospheric physics. The project, *Collaborative Leading Operational UAS Development for Meteorology and Atmospheric Physics (CLOUD MAP)*, will focus on developing and implementing UAS for weather along with their integration with sensors for atmospheric measurements on Earth. She will lead two teams of researchers as part of this endeavor. The first team is focused on investigating the multi-scale GIS correlation issues that occur when data are collected from multiple platforms (e.g., satellites in space, UAS in the atmospheric boundary layer, and ground stations on Earth). The second task is focused on the rapid dissemination of risk information acquired by the various data sources to multiple stakeholders (e.g., emergency managers, first responders, the public, etc.). Both tasks rely heavily on GIS, remote sensing, and geospatial analytics.

**DR. ALYSON GREINER:** In the fall, after last year's Zenith went to press, **Alyson Greiner** was invited to give the keynote lecture at the meeting of the Missouri Geographic Alliance. She thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to interact with this grassroots group of geographic educators, revisit her old stomping ground in Columbia, MO, and take in the area's fall color. One of this year's unplanned and unexpected highlights was a Spring Break trip to Australia. Alyson helped co-teach a study abroad course, "Opera and the Outback." No matter that she had never been to an opera before; that expertise fell to her colleague, Dr. Anne-Marie Condacse, Associate Professor of Voice. Fortunately, Alyson could handle the geography content and other trip logistics (such as leech removal from a student's shoe, no kidding). Whew! Better an encounter with a leech than one of the many poisonous snakes! Among other adventures, the course included attending two operas, *Tosca* and *Madame Butterfly*, at the Sydney Opera House and taking a backstage tour. Jet lag aside, everyone learned a lot and had great fun in the process. Shortly after the trip Alyson was invited to contribute several encyclopedia articles on Australia-related topics to *World Book Encyclopedia*. Alyson continues to plug away on research related to the New Deal and landscape change in Oklahoma. Some recent work examines malaria control in the state, prior to and after the Second World War. She also wrapped up a research project with the State Historic Preservation Office on properties associated with women significant in Oklahoma history. This summer she and life partner, Luis, traveled to and around Spain during that country's summer heat wave. The sangria and gazpacho proved to be great friends, and an excellent complement to Gaudi, *Guernica*, and the many other attractions. Luis continues to thrive and jive in his role as department head of chemistry at UCO. All the earthquakes we've had certainly help with that.

**DR. REUEL HANKS** was named to the Humphreys Chair in the College of Arts and Sciences. Holding the Chair will enable Hanks to support students who seek longer term study abroad experiences. Hanks also served as a Faculty Mentor for Ava Keenen, and presented a paper at a workshop at Australian National University in November, two papers at the International Studies Association meeting in New Orleans in February, another invited paper at the Lang Symposium at the University of Louisville in April, and served as Chair on a panel at the Workshop on Uzbekistan, held at George Washington University in April.

**MICHAEL LARSON:** November 2015 will start Michael's twentieth 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 continues to be 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 2015, was Michael's thirteenth 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. When he is not involved in Departmental business, Michael enjoys spending time with his two granddaughters.



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# STAFF AND FACULTY NEWS

**DR. DALE LIGHTFOOT** looks back with satisfaction on a year well spent on professional and personal goals. He is a member of a dynamic and growing department (16<sup>th</sup> year as Head), enjoyed teaching graduate and undergraduate classes, and completed more research projects than in a typical year. In April he joined a panel reviewing academic team building at the AAG Annual Meeting in Chicago, and also presented his research on canal irrigation in Morocco at the event. With no overseas fieldwork project and more time dedicated to writing each week, projects in queue were finished, including a book proposal (accepted) and three manuscripts submitted to peer-reviewed journals (all in review). A fourth manuscript is underway and a previously-completed book chapter in *Water History and Humanity* is also scheduled for publication soon by UNESCO. He co-lead (with Tom Wikle) a study abroad trip over spring break; an amazing cultural experience in a changing Cuba. Fun goals accomplished this year included a trip to the remote northern and western wilds of Alaska, including visits to 10 national parks (most involving flights into remote areas). He took a family trip to Glacier, Yellowstone, and Teton national parks, an adventure that included a lot of hiking and being driven by fire from his cabin in Glacier NP. He also began work on building an airplane so he can fly something besides rented Cessnas. So far, the Sopwith Camel has a completed fuselage, empennage, and landing gear; the wing spars are on and wings are nearing completion. The new radial engine will arrive in the spring. The family is healthy and happy in their work; Adam is a business major at OSU and doing very well (President's Honor Roll last semester), and Tory is Manager of Research Support Services in the College of Arts & Sciences at OSU.



**DR. HUNG-LING (STELLA) LIU** is a new Research Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography. She is originally from Taipei, Taiwan. Dr. Liu earned her doctoral degree in the Leisure Studies Program at Oklahoma State University in 2012 with the special focus on recreation management. Her research interests include human dimensions of natural resource management, impacts of recreation and tourism, sustainable tourism and community development, and leisure behavior. She is working on the Recreation Management Resource/GIS project for Oklahoma State Parks, an external funded grant from Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department (OTRD). She has presented various recreation and tourism management related presentations this year at the *National Recreation and Park Association*, *Society of Outdoor Recreation Conference*, *Northeastern Recreation Research Symposium*, and *Southwest Park and Recreation Training Institute*. Such topics ranged from financial operation of state parks, visitor satisfaction and service quality, environmental ethics, and serious leisure pursuit in birding and roller skating. She plans to begin new research regarding health benefits and social values of outdoor recreation and tourism. In her free time, she loves travel to different places, enjoys musical and dance performance, and plays with her orange cat, Haiduic.

**DR. ADAM MATHEWS:** This last year has been filled with a variety of research projects in the areas of unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV)-based remote sensing, GIS, applied geography, and place marketing. This year was also filled with travel opportunities starting with the AAG Annual Meeting in Chicago where Adam organized and chaired a session entitled 'Implementing Geospatial Technologies in Viticulture' sponsored by the Wine Specialty Group. Adam visited SST Software in Stillwater in early spring to give a research talk about UAV remote sensing of agriculture. In May, Adam traveled to Stellenbosch University in Stellenbosch, South Africa (near Cape Town) to collaborate with researchers in viticulture and geography. In addition to working with other researchers, Adam gave research talks at both Stellenbosch University and the Cape Peninsula University of Technology while in South Africa. On July 1, the Resource Management Plan-Geographic Information System (RMP-GIS) project began in the Department of Geography. Adam, Drs. Liu and Wu (newly appointed Research Assistant Professors), as well as Dr. Wikle are heading up the project that is a collaborative effort with the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department. The RMP-GIS project will focus on completing GIS work and research as well as preparing resource management plans. Prior to the start of the fall semester, Adam also visited NASA Ames Research Center in Mountain View, California to collaborate with a NASA remote sensing scientist. In addition, Adam was recently elected a director of the ASPRS Heartland Region. This fall Adam is advising Emily Ellis under the Geography Undergraduate Mentors Program. Adam and several other Oklahoma State geographers will be attending the Applied/SWAAG Joint Conference in San Antonio in early-November.



## STAFF AND FACULTY NEWS

**DR. REBECCA SHEEHAN:** This year, Amanda Williams, Human Sciences PhD alum of Oklahoma State University, and I published, “Emerging Adulthood in Time and Space: The Geographic Context of Homelessness,” in the *Journal of Family Theory and Review*. Our intersecting interests in marginal groups and public space led to this fruitful collaboration concerning theoretical insights into young homeless persons’ immediate and intertwined experiences of geography, social networks, and daily paths. Also this year, with Jacqueline Vadjunc, our research (discussed in past *Zeniths*), “Roller Derby’s Publicness: Toward Greater Recognition of Diverse Genders and Sexualities in the Bible Belt,” was published in *Gender, Place & Culture*. I have a book chapter, “Making Home ‘Under the Big Top’: Materialities of Moving a Small Town Every Day and Wintering in Place” coming out in *Event Mobilities: The Politics of Place and Performance*. In this chapter, I explain the typical workings of the three circuses over a year, including a typical day during circus season. I then explore two activities, schooling and funerary activity for circus people to show how dynamic networks create home not as the road or wintering grounds in Hugo, OK, but rather as their amalgamation.

**DR. FATEMEH (TANNAZ) SOLTANI** has recently joined the Department of Geography as a post-doctoral fellow. She completed her Ph.D. in Leisure Studies at Oklahoma State University in July 2015. During her doctoral studies at OSU, she had the opportunity to work as a member of the research team of Dr. Lowell Caneday in several collaborative research and grant projects with recreation agencies (e.g. Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department, Oklahoma State Parks, and Oklahoma Department of Transportation) relevant to the improvement of quality of recreation and tourism services in the state of Oklahoma. She has participated in research linked to several of the Oklahoma State Parks, with primary emphasis on those with lodging and restaurant facilities. Her primary research interest is sustainable tourism management as a powerful source of economic and social development. She is particularly interested in examining the factors for successful recreation and tourism planning in rural communities for community and economic development.

**DR. STEVE STADLER** is cruising along and has received his 35-year OSU pin. He still enjoys his teaching, research, and colleagues. In the last year he has continued research in various physical and social aspects of Oklahoma wind power. One journal article (with former graduate student James Dryden and OU professor Scott Greene) considered the effects of wind power as changed by modeled future climate for wind farms in western Oklahoma. He also authored an article about the Chinese tourist trail for the *Geography Teacher*. He is continuing to serve on the Board of the Oklahoma Renewable Energy Council, on the Steering Committee of the Oklahoma Mesonet, and is president of OKAGE (the state’s K-12 organization that advocates for and supplies materials to the state’s geography teachers). Steve continues to be the course coordinator for Physical Geography and there is always some new twist as he attempts to guide five graduate teaching assistants in their lab duties interacting with upwards of 800 students a year. Steve’s wife, Barb, continues teaching math in the Northern Oklahoma College Gateway program in Stillwater. His son, John, works at Baker-Hughes in Tulsa and his daughter-in-law, Audrey, teaches science at Jenks Middle School. Steve and Barb love travel and went with the department group to Cuba last spring break and did a cruise through the Panama Canal last summer.

Barb and Steve Stadler transit the Panama Canal with the Centennial Bridge carrying the Pan American Highway in the background.



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# STAFF AND FACULTY NEWS

**DR. JACQUELINE VADJUNEC:** I continue to work on a variety of human-environment issues in the Americas. In Spring 2015, I spent my sabbatical working on our ongoing field project in Cimarron County, OK and Union County, NM. I spent much of the summer with the field team (Todd Fagin and Nicole Colston), completing, among other things, oral histories with Dust Bowl survivors and their families, and as part of our NSF-funded research on issues related to land-use, vulnerability, and resiliency, especially under drought conditions. The field trips with students continue. Last Fall, the students of my Field Techniques class explored Greenleaf State Park. We worked on various mapping, historical, and tourism-related research projects for the Oklahoma State Parks Office of Tourism.

**JING WANG** continues to assist students and faculty with GIS/RS research and technology needs. In her own research, she has developed a ten-year time series of data to evaluate relative greenness of vegetation in Oklahoma using MODIS and NLCD satellite imagery. This analysis is a continuation of the work she has been doing for the past two years in collaboration with the department of Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering to update the OK-FIRE model. The dataset will be used to monitor vegetation changes at Mesonet stations throughout Oklahoma, and the results of the analysis will be used to update the previous OK-Fire model. The updates will be available to the public in the coming months. Besides research and upgrading the lab, in the past year Jing has participated in the UAV training, helped with geospatial workshops, and attended several regional professional conferences.

**DR. TOM WIKLE** remains busy with research, teaching, travel, administration and... flying! In 2014 Tom and longtime research collaborator Guy Bailey (now President of the University of Texas, Rio Grande Valley) launched the “Linguistic Survey of the Southern Great Plains” that explores language variation and change in Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas. Last year Tom also collaborated with Jon Comer on a paper looking at television broadcasting that recently appeared in *Applied Geography* and with Ph.D. student Thomas Craig on a paper on geospatial internship programs. Two other projects are underway with colleagues Amy Frazier (a look at the “rebranding” of geography departments) and Adam Mathews (an assessment of certification in GIS). In March Tom and colleague Dale Lightfoot led a study abroad course that visited old Havana and Cuba’s Viñales Valley, famous for cigar tobacco. The tour included geographers/spouses Steve and Pat Tweedie and Steve and Barb Stadler. In May Tom worked with Jon Comer to lead a study abroad course in Eastern Europe with stops in Budapest, Cracow, Prague and Vienna. Each fall semester Tom teaches a section of Physical Geography (GEOG 1114). He is now in his 16<sup>th</sup> year as Associate Dean within the College of Arts and Sciences. During his free time he serves as a flight instructor at Stillwater Regional Airport flying Cessna 150s and 172s. In March Tom and Missy will celebrate a (belated) 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary with a trip to Ireland. In 2015 their daughter Paige was named an OSU Outstanding Senior (and Phi Beta Kappa member) and graduated with a degree in psychology before starting a residency program at a church in Dallas. Their son Garrett is a junior majoring in political science and works as a tour guide for prospective OSU students and their parents.

**EMILY WILLIAMS:** Now that our son Bryn has graduated from OSU, Tom and I feel like we can travel without planning our trips around him and his interests. So this summer the two of us went on an Alaska land tour and cruise. What an adventure to a state that is still a frontier! Talkeetna was quirky and interesting—the mayor is a cat named Mr. Stubbs, which shows a remarkable lack of desire for authority, pretty typical of much of the Alaska we saw. We made a Tundra Tour where we saw grizzly bear, caribou, moose, eagles, and Dahl sheep way up on a cliff. But the most exciting part of the tour was seeing the peak of Denali (previously known as Mt. McKinley)! We thought it would not happen, but the clouds separated just long enough for us to get pictures. Now we are a part of the 30% of tourists who have seen the top! The cruise was our first: the glaciers were awesome, literally, and chilling, and being on the cruise ship was like living in slow motion. The towns we visited were quaint and, once we got past all the cruise lines’ tourist traps, unique. In Skagway we took a bus tour to the White Pass—saw a grizzly sitting by the road eating berries and even got to cross over into the Yukon Territories! Speaking of eating, back on the ship the food and its presentation was outstanding at all hours, no matter where you sat down to eat! And the people we met along the way were unforgettable—the best part of the whole trip. Back at home we now get literature from every cruise line that exists so we can plan our next one. I can hardly wait!



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# STAFF AND FACULTY NEWS



**DR. I-CHUN (NICKY) WU** is a new Research Assistant Professor graduated from Michigan State University. She is originally from Taipei, Taiwan and came to the U.S. for pursuing her doctoral degree in 2007. Her research interests focus on human-environment interactions with the specific focus on the sustainable use of natural resources for tourism and recreation. Her current work is associated with resource management and planning for Oklahoma state parks. Utilizing geospatial technology such as the Global Positioning System (GPS) and Geographic Information Systems (GIS), she works to manage, develop, maintain, and improve a large web-based geospatial database that is designed to inventory, visualize, and manage facilities and structures on multiple Oklahoma state parks. This online geodatabase helps park managers making critical managerial decisions.

She has been part of many other research projects involving outdoor recreation and its impact on natural resources. She has studied park and trail users, boaters, bikers, snowmobilers, and off-road vehicle riders. Several important theories and concepts including carrying capacity, feasibility of park operation, willingness to pay, recreational specialization, perception of risk, destination choice, accessibility to parks, and visitor satisfaction, were examined in the research projects. In her spare time, she likes to play and watch basketball and enjoys the company of her lovely cat, Roody.



**DR. HONGBO YU** received his ten-year service pin for OSU faculty early this fall, marking his decade-long citizenship in the OSU Geography nation. Happy times seem to go by so fast! In the past year, he continued to work on GIS and transportation related research projects and serve as the Coordinator of the GIS Certificate program in the department. At the 2015 Annual AAG Meeting in Chicago, he teamed up with three other scholars from the US, Sweden, and the UK, and co-organized three time geography sessions at the meeting. A total of 15 papers, contributed by researchers from the US, Sweden, Netherlands, Germany, China, Canada, and Belgium, were presented in these special topic sessions and they were well-received by the audience. In the past year, Hongbo served as the major advisor of three graduate students in the department. In the past summer, William Van Ness completed his creative component project under Hongbo's supervision and successfully defended it in front of the research committee. His project title is *Riding the Bus: A Study of the Accessibility of the OSU - Stillwater Community Transit*. Drs. Comer and Sheehan were the other two members on his committee.

In the summer, Hongbo and his family traveled to China to visit their relatives and friends. On this trip, they experienced a variety in means of transportation, including air (jet plane), ground (high-speed rail, subway, long-distance coach bus, city bus, taxi, bicycles, and of course, private vehicle), water (boat), and cable (aerial tramway). Some of them were short and sweet, but some were really long and exhausting. It was quite an experience for a transportation geographer! Besides sharing wonderful times with relatives and friends, they also managed to have some great sightseeing in China. They climbed the Great Wall, walked around in the Forbidden City, toured the West Lake in the rain on a boat, and took nice photo shoots of the night scene at the Bund in Shanghai. They accrued a lot of great memories and enjoyed their summer trip very much!



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## FORMER STAFF/FACULTY NEWS

**DR. RICHARD HECOCK (Professor Emeritus):** As before, Hecock activities mostly have to do with lake water quality issues for me, community action for Georgia. Ours was a gorgeous summer judged by the well-spaced rainfall and the number of sunny days in the 70's and 80's with soft breezes. The garden produced prolifically, and our Northwoods put on a good show for summer visitors (children, grandchildren, and a few others). Our watercraft fleet grew by two kayaks, bringing the total to eight. Fitness efforts are mostly centered around a new puppy (shepherd/lab mix) with boundless energy and an urge to roam. Travels have been a bit thin since we have been trying to avoid humiliations of air-travel. On road trips we did most of the 500-mile length of the Blue Ridge Parkway last spring and just completed a western swing to revisit badlands. It will be eastward again for the Thanksgiving Holidays with our Brooklynite grandkids. Notwithstanding our airlines boycott (one cannot be completely consistent on these matters), for the Christmas/New Years holidays we will fly to Mexico to spend some time in the City and Merida with Doug and Andrea, who are enjoying a Fulbright year away from Bucknell.

**DR. JOHN ROONEY (Professor Emeritus):** 2014 has been a good year for the Rooney family. Again we have lived in two places, both Stillwater and Grand Haven, Michigan. I now have a new hip. What a great decision to have that done. Not only has it improved my golf game, but it also makes walking once again a great pleasure. And believe me Grand Haven is a wonderful place to take a long walk. We have woods, sand and a great long pier jutting out into Lake Michigan on which to tread. Sandy and I and our dog Annie relish our time outdoors in that soothing environment. We had many visitors this summer to our place near the Lake Michigan shore. All of our family made it to Grand Haven. Many of our Oklahoma friends visited as well. We continue to be heavily involved in the Folds of Honor Foundation. By last account the foundation has provided over 10,000 college scholarships to students of deceased and disabled military personnel throughout every state in the country. And the growth continues to accelerate. Major Dan spent much of the year on the road in addition to re-upping for flight status in the Air Force. Dan and family were at Tyndall Air Force Base in north Florida for much of the summer. He now flies five times a month out of Tyndall. By this time next year we may no longer own the Grand Haven Golf Club. We have been involved there since 1998 and it is now time to pursue other fun things. I may even write a book entitled "So You Thought You Wanted To Own Your Own Golf Course". There has been much joy but also a great deal of hard work. Fortunately we have a great staff at Grand Haven, many of whom are now among our best friends. At last count we still had 10 wonderful grandchildren. As reported last year, Dan and Jacqy have five girls aged 13 down to two. Beth and John have two boys and a girl named Kyra who is now a sophomore at Notre Dame. Son Ryan with his recently minted MBA is a marketing exec with the Phoenix Suns and son Liam is spending the current semester studying in Barranquilla, Columbia. Kate's oldest, Jack, just turned 16 and is a budding basketball star in Oklahoma City. Luke seems to be more into football and academics. One last note: my old friend and student Dr. Bill Sutton of the University of South Florida and I are teaming up on a book dealing with the evolution and current craziness of our intercollegiate sports system. It will be more than a rehash of my earlier works on athletic recruiting and potential reform. We wish all of you a great 2016 and beyond. Maybe it is time for a Reunion!!

**DR. STEVE TWEEDIE (Associate Professor Emeritus):** Another year of interesting travels starting in Cuba with an OSU Geography group in March, before the US policy change. We beat the rush. In April, we gawked at Chicago's tall buildings after highlighting the ups and downs of our cohousing commune for an AAG retirement living panel. The rest of the year involved family-related travels to North Carolina, the Northeast, Scotland, and New Mexico. We've ourselves to blame for passing the travel bug to Ann and David. While in Scotland we did look up the very home that Alexander Tweedie, wife, and 11 children left for America in 1849 (see photo). Why they left? We don't know.

The Tweedie family in front of their ancestral home in Scotland. Note "Glencotho" on the fence. That's the name of the house. A Tweedie family book says they came over from Glencotha. They used to think that was the name of a village. In 1981, when they first found this place, they looked all over the area before someone told them it was a house name. Steve is seen here with son David, grandson Lachlan (David's son), and daughter Ann.



# 2015 VISITORS

Several former students and friends of the department visited us in Stillwater since we last published the Zenith. It is always great to see you and we welcome your visit!

**Ryan Sigworth** (M.S. 2004), traveling from Washington, D.C., visited our department in late fall 2014 and again stopped in Stillwater with his wife Susan in January 2015.

**Dick Hackett** (former faculty member) visited Stillwater to see friends in January 2015. Dick recently retired from Southeastern Oklahoma State University and resides in Durant, Oklahoma.

**Nathan Mattox** (B.S. 1998; M.S. 2000) was a July visitor to the department and enjoyed seeing the Department's Murray Hall quarters for the first time. Nathan is the GIS Enterprise Systems Administrator for Columbia, Missouri.

**Sage Sheldon** (B.S. 2005) visited campus in August, coming from Oklahoma City where she works as a GIS specialist.

**Hawta Khayyat** (Ph.D. 2012) visited in August 2015 and stayed in Stillwater for the day. He was visiting from Erbil, Kurdistan, Iraq on a business trip to Texas and Arkansas and diverted to Stillwater to see friends.

**Jeremy Odenwald** (B.S. 2003; M.S. 2006) visited our department in October from Tulsa where he works as a GIS specialist with the City of Tulsa.

## NECROLOGY



**Jack Acklin (B.A. 1958)**, a graduate of our Geography program, died October 20, 2015 in a Tulsa hospital. Jack kept in touch with the department through news notes in the Zenith and was a donor to OSU Geography. He was also a family friend of Brad Bays, having worked with Brad's stepfather as an FBI partner in the Stillwater office ca. 1974-81. Jack retired from the FBI in the late 1990s and spent time playing golf and enjoying his grandchildren.



**George O. Carney**, a faculty member and Regents Professor in Geography from 1970 until 2005, died on April 13, 2015. George was an avid St. Louis Cardinal baseball fan and loved attending OSU basketball games. He was a real booster and was always loyal to OSU. George joined the faculty in the Department of Geography in 1970. His colleagues knew him as a faithful friend and good department citizen. He was known to students as one of the most popular educators on campus through his innovative Geography of Music course. He was also known for his "hats" and was famous for shaking each student's hand as they entered the classroom. His favorite thing was spending time with his family. He coached several youth sports teams and loved to travel. After his retirement, George continued to live in Stillwater. The OSU Board of Regents expressed respect to his memory and appreciation for the many years of service he rendered to the State of Oklahoma and its citizens, and his family is placing a commemorative bench in his honor on the OSU campus.



**James Lee Marr (B.A. 1968)** earned his undergraduate degree in Geography from OSU before moving to OU for a M.S. degree in Regional and City Planning. He died November 15, 2014. James began his professional career in city and regional planning in Missouri and Oklahoma before moving to positions selling medical supplies and insurance services to individuals and businesses across Oklahoma. He co-founded the Marr Group in 1996 which he operated in partnership with his daughter. He had a real enthusiasm for working with others and was active in many community organizations. His family and many friends offered donations to the Department of Geography in his memory.



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# GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

## MASTER'S STUDENTS:

Liz Armstrong  
Brian Birchler  
Carson Bode  
Jordan Brasher  
Brian Gilson  
Ben Hemingway  
Stephanie Koehn  
Christopher Krieger  
Anthony Pentimonti  
Lauren Wood

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## DOCTORAL STUDENTS:

Samayita Bandyopadhyay  
Thomas Cox  
Thomas Craig  
Colton Flynn  
Robert Garrett  
Matt Haffner  
Stephanie Heald  
Keeley Heise  
Jeremy Henning  
Puja Jana  
Kimberly Johnson  
Jordan McAlister  
Stuart McAllister  
William McBrayer  
Gustavo Ovando  
Qinyue Pan  
Adam Payne  
Nick Rose  
Amanda Weber  
Yanxia Wu  
Yun Zhao

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# GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

**ELIZABETH ARMSTRONG:** I am a 2<sup>nd</sup> year Master's student from Stillwater, OK. I received my undergraduate degree from OSU in Recreation Management with an emphasis on Middle Eastern Studies. I am studying the political representations by Oklahoma Legislators of district constituencies surrounding the Affordable Care Act. Oklahomans remain unhealthy and under-insured. Some health initiatives have been passed to remedy certain afflictions; however, larger portions via government grants have also been returned to the Federal Government on principle in a conservative state. My research is designed to analyze the discourse of state officials in regards to the demographic qualities surrounding health within their voting districts. The focus of my research is to determine whether or not under-insured individuals are represented in political discourses. My greatest achievement is my awesome daughter, with whom I spend much of my free time and who is definitely the coolest office buddy.

**SAMAYITA BANDYOPADHYAY:** I am a third-year Ph.D. student, interested in the human dimensions of global environmental change, cultural and political ecology, and the socio-geographical aspects of risk/hazards. Specifically, I propose to work on impacts of landslide hazards on livelihoods and sustainability of communities in a Himalayan mountainous region. I am fortunate to be able to work with some fine faculties in the geography and sociology departments, namely, Dr. Jacqueline Vadjunec (advisor), Dr. Dale Lightfoot, Dr. Adam Mathews and Dr. Duane Gill. I am originally from Kolkata, India, and did my Masters from Tripura University on Geography and Disaster Management in 2008.

**BRIAN BIRCHLER** comes to us from Kansas City, Missouri. He graduated from Northwest Missouri State University with a BS in Geography and a BS in GIS in May 2015. His primary interests are in cultural/ historical geography with an emphasis in GIS. He likes to watch and play soccer and go camping or hiking whenever possible.

**JORDAN BRASHER** is a second year Master's student who received his BS in Geoscience from Middle Tennessee State University in 2014 with a concentration in geography and geographic techniques. His interests are in identity, race, place, place-names, representation, commemoration, and a milieu of other topics related to cultural geography. This is his final year in the Master's program; his thesis is about how historically black newspapers during the settlement of Langston, Oklahoma, represented the town as a place of refuge or a "black utopia." He is currently a research assistant in GIS for Dr. Amy Frazier, and is working with her on a project related to environmental variables that influence the touchdown locations of tornadoes in the United States. He is currently applying to PhD programs and will soon be anxiously awaiting those programs' responses. His greatest achievement in the department so far is winning fourth place in the Stillwater "Fun Timers" bowling league in Spring 2015 with fellow geographers Dr. Adam Mathews, Michael Larson, Nick Rose, and Lauren Wood.

**THOMAS COX:** I am a second-year Ph.D. student from Claremore, OK. I received both my Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Oklahoma State University. I'm studying and conducting geoarchaeological research under my advisor Dr. Carlos Cordova. My specific research lies in reanalyzing mammoth paleontological and archaeological sites in Oklahoma. Many of these sites were categorized as paleontological due to their lack of artifacts, and the reigning belief in the Clovis first hypothesis. However, since that belief is currently being debated, many of these sites are being reanalyzed regardless of whether or not they contained human artifacts. Just because a site doesn't contain artifacts, it does not mean that it is not archaeological. The focal point of my research is to try and determine where the first human association boundary is. And, as always, my greatest achievements are my children, who are both still serving this great country. My motto for this year is, "Old dogs can learn new tricks; they're just a little slower at it."



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# GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS



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**THOMAS CRAIG:** I am a third-year PhD student, with interests in cultural/historical geography, popular culture, and geographic education. This past August I successfully completed my comprehensive exams and I am currently working toward defending my dissertation proposal this semester. My research will examine how U.S. undergraduates construct, practice, maintain, and challenge knowledge about a specific distant place and imagined geography, India, through a relatively new qualitative method, Photovoice. This past year I presented papers at two national conferences, the American Anthropological Association's annual meeting in Washington D.C. and the Association of American Geographers in Chicago. I was recently accepted into the Gail Hobbs Student Paper competition, organized by the Geographic Education Specialty Group for March's AAG meeting in San Francisco, where I will present on research I conducted with Dr. Tom Wikle on perceptions and practices of GIS internships within the United States. My wife Keira and I, along with our children, Jackson (6) and Madison (3), continue to enjoy living in Stillwater.

**K. COLTON FLYNN** is a first year PhD geography student. His research interests include food geography, remote sensing, agricultural improvements, and geography education. Before starting the PhD program at Oklahoma State University (OSU) he resided in Arkansas where he worked for the University of Arkansas – Fort Smith (UAFS) as a Visiting Instructor. At UAFS he taught courses such as World Regional Geography as well as Food Geography and the Environment. Prior to his faculty appointment at the UAFS, Colton completed a Master of Arts in Geography and Bachelor of Science in Earth Science from the University of Arkansas – Fayetteville. His Master's thesis focused on the consumption and perceptions of local foods. Outside of academia Colton trains for Ironman competitions and races for the OSU triathlon club team.

**BRIAN GILSON** is a second-year Master's student currently working on his thesis: "Ethnosymbolism and Government Discourse in Azerbaijan." Brian and his wife Shelly, along with their two youngest children, recently moved to Stillwater which is quickly becoming home. New home, job, schools, church, and friends are all going well. Brian enjoys working with students in the various GIS courses that he is a TA for, and he is also looking forward to continuing research with his adviser, Dr. Hanks.

**MATTHEW HAFFNER:** I am a second year Ph.D. student, and my research interests include urban geography, volunteer geographic information, and quantitative methods. I completed a M.S. in Geography at Oklahoma State in the summer of 2014, and I completed a B.S.Ed. with majors in Geography and Mathematics at Pittsburg State University in 2012. I am originally from Pleasant Hill, Missouri.

**KEELEY HEISE:** My name is Keeley Heise, and I am in my third year of my Ph.D program. My research involves social vulnerability and resilience to blizzards in the northern Plains. This fall I am taking my comprehensive exams and am hoping to have my proposal defended by the end of the semester or early in the spring semester. I attended the AAG national meeting in Chicago in April, where I presented a poster based on a research project using my Master's thesis data and GWR. Over the summer, I worked part time in Cartography services. I also joined Drs. Comer and Wikle and four other OSU students on a 12-day trip to Eastern Europe at the end of May, partially funded thanks to Dr. Tweedie. This is a part of the world I have always wanted to visit, even though I was there as a baby. The highlights of the trip for me included a visit to the home of Mozart in Vienna, exploring Budapest on the first day before the other groups arrived (and all of us taking a nap in a little park across the Danube in Buda), and getting to see the Bone Cathedral in Kutna Hora, Czech Republic (outside Prague).



Keeley in front of Schönbrunn Palace in Vienna, complete with photobomb by Drs. Wikle and Comer.

Keeley in front of the Lennon Wall in Prague.



Some of the decorations inside the Bone Cathedral.

# GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

**JEREMY HENNING:** I am a third year PhD student and my adviser is Amy Frazier. I am focusing on the applications of remote sensing for detecting Kudzu, which is an invasive species.

**GUSTAVO OVANDO:** I am a first year PhD student. I received a Bachelor's degree in Geography from Brigham Young University and Master's degree also in Geography from Oklahoma State University. I am interested in the integrative use of Remote Sensing and GIS technologies to solve and understand human environmental interactions at urban scales. I am also interested (as an amateur/enthusiast) in the history and evolution of the Indigenous cultures of North America, especially the spatio-historical connections between Uto-Aztec speaking peoples from Mesoamerica and the Rockies. I am from Mexico and of north Yucatec Mayan descent.

**ANTHONY PENTIMONTI** earned his BS in Earth Science from Oregon State University in 2015. His research interests include natural and extracted resources, especially within arctic and mountainous regions. An article written about some of his previous field work can be found at: <http://ethosmagonline.com/the-winter-that-never-was>.

**NICK ROSE:** I am a Ph.D. student from Bethel, Ohio. I received my Master's from the Department of Geography at Oklahoma State University in 2011. I am currently working toward my comprehensive exams and a dissertation proposal. My research interests include the cultural/historical geography of Northeastern Oklahoma; more specifically, the development of lead and zinc extraction's influenced on Native American property rights.

**AMANDA WEBER:** I am a second year PhD student. My focus is historic medical geography. I am interested in how place shapes quarantine and isolation practices, specifically in New York with attention to former and future medical uses of the islands. In the summer of 2015, I received a Doel Reed Center scholarship for a field research course in Taos, NM with Dr. Rebecca Sheehan. The course explored the ethnicity, place, and tourism of Taos, in relation to the Square and Pueblo. Currently, I am working toward my comprehensive exams and a dissertation proposal.



Near Taos, NM.



Ladan, Amanda, Jordan (end of course celebration)

**LAUREN WOOD** is a second year MS student. She received a BS in Geography and a Certificate in Geographic Information Systems from Oklahoma State University. She received the 2015 OKSCAUG Scholarship, and her research interests are in wind energy.

**YUN ZHAO:** I am starting my 4<sup>th</sup> year as a PhD student in the Geography Department. My research mainly focuses on potential accessibility impact of the newly proposed Dallas-Houston high-speed rail. I am also trying to look into the possibility of using existing public transit as feeder services to accommodate the mobility of high-speed rail passengers at the intra-city level. During the summer of 2015, I worked as an intern at the Transportation Department in the City of Stillwater. I helped them manage and update the citywide traffic signage inventory during my internship. I also witnessed the construction of Stillwater's first roundabout at 10<sup>th</sup> & Main. The roundabout now serves as the south entrance to Stillwater downtown. If you haven't seen the roundabout, you need to check it out!



# CENTER FOR APPLICATIONS OF REMOTE SENSING

Over the past year, CARS has continued to be involved in a research collaboration with the department of Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering to investigate long-time vegetation patterns for the OK-FIRE model. This year, CARS has furthered the initial findings by developing a program to compute values extracted from multiple remotely sensed imagery. The results upgrade the initial model with higher resolution and better location accuracy to evaluate land cover types and relative greenness across Oklahoma.

CARS continues to support the Geography Department with GIS/RS analysis, software/hardware maintenance and lab management. Over the summer, CARS led the effort to install and troubleshoot the installation of new machines in our two computer labs as well as retiring several old servers. With the upgraded hardware and migration of data to a new server, we are striving to advance our capabilities for geospatial analysis and remote sensing research in order to better assist the department!

## 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 Foundation-OSU GIS consortium (AAPGF-OSU). This past year was our sixth year of this multi-year funded project. The Cartographic Specialist position vacated by April Chipman was filled by Clay Barrett. There were two completed projects over the course of the past year, the Pennsylvania Digital Oil and Gas Mapping and Stratigraphic Distribution of Hydrocarbon Production from 19 Counties in the Abilene Area projects. During this time two additional projects were brought to the final review stage and are expected to be completed this fall: the Geological Atlas of the Rocky Mountain Region and the Tectonic Map of North America. The next couple of years will be focused on digitization of a series of twelve regional highway maps printed by the AAPG. The first Geological Highway Map completed will be the Texas region, which will also be completed this fall.

Last year saw the creation of a Graduate Assistantship position currently filled by Lauren Wood in addition to the many student workers employed. We said goodbye to students who graduated, Alex Comer and Nathan Smith, and expect to see both Danielle Dear and Kirsten Kuhn graduate this fall. In anticipation of this, Brooke Atherton and Brooke Bastie (both BS Geography students) have been hired to maintain production on the Geological Highway maps.

In addition to the AAPGF-OSU work, Cartography Services is also in its sixth 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 found Michael Larson and two graduate students, Stephanie Heald and Kim Johnson, roaming the Oklahoma Panhandle and the northwest counties of the state.



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## CARTOGRAPHY SERVICES (CONT'D)



Last spring, Cartography Services once again took the lead and, with the help of a number of students, sponsored an exhibit at the 2015 GIS Day at the Capitol.

Participating in this event were (in photo from left): Dr. Adam Mathews, Nathan Smith, Emily Ellis, Kathryn Wenger, Michael Larson, Nick Rose, and Clay Barrett.

Cartography Services is not just work. In an effort to build a little esprit de corps, the student “minion” employees of Cartography Services designed t-shirts to commemorate their life changing experiences working here.



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

Alex Comer	Nathan Smith	Curtis Finchum	Stephanie Heald
Kim Johnson	Danielle Dear	Kirsten Kuhn	Lauren Wood
Brooke Atherton	Brooke Bastie	Teddy Breig	

## JOURNAL OF CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY

Another year’s worth of articles and book reviews have been published in the *Journal of Cultural Geography*. The February 2015 issue featured a special issue on Immigrant Identity and Place, guest edited by Dave Kaplan and Elizabeth Chacko. In addition to the articles in that special issue, some others that may be of interest to Zenith readers include articles on sim racing (“sim” is short for “simulated”), central European postage stamps, and Buddhism in the Four Corners area. These articles, and more, were published in 2015 issues. As a reminder, OSU alums, students, and faculty, can view or download journal articles via the library website.



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# NATIONAL LAB DAY EVENT

In May 2015, Dr. Amy Frazier hosted two groups of high school students for National Lab Day in the Geography Department and the Center for Applications of Remote Sensing. National Lab Day is a national effort to remedy deficiencies in the teaching and accessibility of STEM disciplines by creating engaging and developmentally appropriate laboratory exercises for middle and high school students. The high school students that visited in May learned how online mapping tools such as GoogleEarth and geospatial analyses are used by rescue and recovery operations in the aftermath of major disasters like the Nepal earthquake in April 2015, which had only recently impacted South Asia at the time and rescue and recovery efforts were still ongoing. Specifically, the students used remote sensing, geographic information systems (GIS), and GoogleEarth to map out collapsed buildings from a similar incident: the 2010 Haiti Earthquake. Students then toured the Center for Applications of Remote Sensing where we had our department Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) on display.



Students participating in a mapping recovery exercise to chart damage in the aftermath of the 2010 Haiti Earthquake



Students posing by the Geography Department's Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV), which is equipped with a multispectral sensor to gather aerial imagery during flight.



# GAMMA THETA UPSILON

The Chi Chapter of GTU initiated 13 new members at our departmental awards ceremony in the spring of 2015, and we are looking forward to another new initiation class this coming spring. In the spring, GTU hosted the annual Beer, Wine, and Cheese party at the home of Dr. Wikle. Our chapter was also named as one of the Outstanding Chapters by the national office for some of our work the previous year, including the Textbooks for Ethiopia drive. Through the raising of funds via coffee sales and donations from those in the department, GTU was able to sponsor two Angel Tree kids last Christmas and is looking to do the same again this year with the help of our officers: Keeley Heise (President), Amanda Weber (Vice President), Elizabeth Armstrong (Secretary/Historian), and Tom Cox (Treasurer).

## FORUM OF GEOGRAPHY GRADUATE STUDENTS

Hello Everyone, my name is Lauren Wood and I am the President of the Forum of Geography Graduate Students (FoGG). FoGG's purpose is to serve as a unified voice for the graduate students in the Geography Department in order to help create and promote dialog with the faculty and staff. This dialog promotes professional growth and improvement in all aspects of the graduate experience. This year the Vice President and Secretary is Jeremy Henning, the Treasurer is Tom Cox, the Principal Delegate is Elizabeth Armstrong, the GPSGA Representative is Jordan Brasher, and the Alternate Delegate is Samayita Bandyopadhyay.

## UNDERGRADUATE GEOGRAPHY CLUB

The Undergraduate Geography Club is striving to plan events to promote participation between faculty, staff, graduate students, and undergraduate students. They are currently planning a Geography Trivia Night and an end of the year holiday party.

## UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS & THEIR HOMETOWNS

Eric Matthew Allen, Perkins, OK  
Brooke Atherton, Edmond, OK  
Lela Berastequi, Plano, TX  
Joel Bjornen, Bartlesville, OK  
Austin Boardman, Tulsa, OK  
Sam Brander, Tulsa, OK  
Theodore Breig, Denver, CO  
Nicholas Deyoe, Jones, OK  
Matt Dunn, Stillwater, OK  
Emily Ellis, Edmond, OK  
Chike Etumudor, Broken Arrow, OK  
Austin Fessler, Broken Arrow, OK  
Thomas Gravenstreter, Muncie, IN  
Joshua Grundy, Afton, OK  
Michael Hall, Drumright, OK  
Jaryd Hinch, Ponca City, OK  
Hayden Harrison, Stroud, OK  
Taylor Iberosi, Dallas, TX

Frank Jensik, Fredonia, KS  
Morgan Johnson, Tulsa, OK  
Avonlea Keenen, Claremore, OK  
Kayla King, Cyril, OK  
Amanda Lahue, Stillwater, OK  
Broderick Malloy, Arcadia, OK  
Maddison Mayer, Tulsa, OK  
Gabe McCarty, Norman, OK  
Maria McKeaigg, Sand Springs, OK  
Rachel Oestmann, Anahuac, TX  
Giovanni Penna, Cleveland, OK  
Anthony Pennington, Edmond, OK  
Curtis Rich, Edmond, OK  
Catherine Shropshire, The Woodlands, TX  
Ryan Smith, Tulsa, OK  
Daniel Surach, Frisco, TX  
Trenton Williams, Oklahoma City, OK



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# CERTIFICATES IN GIS EARNED

## SPRING 2015:

Nathan Smith  
Ross Romero

# BACHELOR'S DEGREES EARNED

## FALL 2014:

Sarah Lamoreaux  
Tommy Casey

## SPRING 2015:

Ryan Conner                  Ross Romero  
Kirsten Kuhn                Nathan Smith  
Lauren Montalbano

# MASTER'S DEGREES EARNED

## SPRING 2015:

Clay Barrett  
Advisor: Amy Frazier  
Thesis: "Monitoring Eastern Oklahoma Lake Water Quality Using Landsat"  
  
Gustavo Ovando  
Advisor: Amy Frazier  
Thesis: "Geographic Assessment of Urban Quality of Life Using Socioeconomic and Environmental Factors Across Mexico City"  
  
Jennifer Sebesta  
Advisor: Alyson Greiner  
Thesis: "Think Local, Buy Local, Be Local: Defining the Local in Oklahoma's Alternative Food Network"

## SUMMER 2015:

William Van Ness  
Advisor: Hongbo Yu  
Thesis: "Riding the Bus: A Study of the Accessibility of the OSU-Stillwater Community Transit"  
  
Kathryn Wenger  
Advisor: Jacqueline Vadjunec  
Thesis: "Land Change and Vulnerability to Drought: Impact and Growth of Center Pivot Irrigation in Union County, NM and Cimarron County, OK"

# PH.D. DEGREES EARNED

## FALL 2014:

Steven Ericson  
Advisor: Jon Comer  
Dissertation: "The Impact of an Urban University and its Neighborhood: A Case Study of Georgia State University and Downtown Atlanta"  
  
William Flynn  
Advisor: Allen Finchum  
Dissertation: "Geographic Perspectives on Contemporary/Smooth Jazz"

## SPRING 2014:

Siewe Siewe  
Advisor: Jacqueline Vadjunec  
Dissertation: "Deforestation: Impact on Carbon Stocks, Biodiversity and the Effects of Conservation Policies on the People and Forests of the Korup National Park (KNP) in Cameroon"





# COLLOQUIA

- 2/23/2015 Joel Jenswold, Reuel Hanks, Bolat Tatibekov, and Galym Zhussipbek  
Panel Discussion: “Kazakhstan: Regional Development and Security in Eurasia”
- 3/2/2015 Emily Skop, University of Colorado, Colorado Springs  
“Indian Immigrant Identities and the Internet”
- 3/13/2015 Amelie Davis, Miami University  
“Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity, and Ecosystem Services Across an Urban Socioeconomic Gradient”
- 4/2/2015 Megan Holroyd, University of Kansas, Lawrence  
“The Geography of Coffee”
- 4/6/2015 Emily Fekete, University of Kansas, Lawrence  
“Introduction to Geographies of the Global Digital Divide”
- 5/4/2015 Andrea Gaughan, University of Louisville  
“The Nexus of Human, Climate and Natural Resource Systems at Regional to Global Scales”
- 9/14/2015 David Parr, Independent Geoanalyst, Metropolitan State University of Denver  
“Data Quality and the Crowd: VGI\* for Mapping, Social Networking, and Citizen Science” \*Volunteered Geographic Information
- 10/19/2015 Stella Liu, Department of Geography, Oklahoma State University  
“Making Connection Between People, Place, and Plan: A Road Map to Manage Recreation and Tourism”
- 11/23/2015 Christopher Galletti, Dartmouth College  
“Climate Variability and Land Change in Dhofar, Oman - A tale of monsoons, civil war, and social change as told by satellites”
- 11/30/2015 Tammy Parece, Virginia Tech  
“Geospatial Analysis of Microclimates to Site Urban Agriculture”
- 12/7/2015 Peter Kedron, Ryerson University, Toronto, Ontario Canada  
“Innovation as a driver of integrated social, economic, and ecological adaptations in energy and agriculture”



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# GEOGRAPHERS IN THE FIELD

## DALE LIGHTFOOT and TOM WIKLE: Cuba Study Abroad

Thirteen OSU students and other university-affiliated participants (including Drs. Tweedie and Stadler) traveled with a Department of Geography study abroad course during the 2015 spring break. This student group included two of our own: doctoral student Jordan McAlister and geography major Lauren Montalbano. The course was organized by Dale Lightfoot and Tom Wikle. Themes of the course centered on environment and heritage and organized visits were made to historic sites in Old Havana, a visit with an urban architect involved in the historic preservation and re-development of the city, cultural sites associated with the syncretically fused religions of Catholicism and Santeria, an organic farm cooperative, a visit with the environmental planners and community organizers for the Metropolitan Park of Havana, a UNESCO Biosphere reserve and eco-community, and traditional life in the tobacco and sugar producing areas of rural, western Cuba. In addition to structured activities, there was much free time for exploration and informal education, and lots of good music (and dancing). Cuba, we learned, is a fascinating place undergoing an experiment in communi-capitalism, much like China began implementing—slowly but steadily—in the 1980s-1990s (complete with dual local+tourist currencies like China had in place until the early-1990s). Cuba remains a time capsule, but change (privatization, entrepreneurship, links to others through tourism and business) is already underway. The prevailing mood in the country is optimism, but no one knows how this will all shake out. It is a grand experiment in compromise, and still in progress.



Che Guevara on the side of an elementary school, Las Terrazas, Cuba



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# GEOGRAPHERS IN THE FIELD



Old American cars, Havana, Cuba



Study abroad student group in Cuba



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# GEOGRAPHERS IN THE FIELD

## JON COMER and TOM WIKLE: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Eastern Europe

Jon Comer and Tom Wikle co-led a Study Abroad trip on the “21st Century Eastern Europe” in May 2015. OSU students Lela Berastequi, Nick Deyoe, Natalie Fieldsend, Keeley Heise, and Nguyen Le plus Tom’s brother Jim went, and we were joined by similar sized college groups from Miami Dade College, University of the Ozarks (Arkansas), and North Country Community College (upstate New York).

After flying from OKC to Atlanta to Budapest (via Paris), we had time to explore the city most of the first day due to a mid-morning arrival at the Budapest Airport. We visited St. Istvan’s Cathedral and had time to explore along the Danube River and crisscross the Chain Bridge and wander up Castle Hill. Day 2 in Budapest started with a bus tour of the main sights and sites, seeing Hero’s Square, St. Matthias Church, and the Citadella, followed by afternoon free time and ending with an evening river cruise on the Danube that was beautiful until a thunderstorm cut the excursion short.

A day-long bus trip was livened up with a short stop in Donovaly Ski Resort in Slovakia for lunch before arriving in Kraków for some free time and dinner. Day 2 in Kraków featured a walking tour up Wawel Hill to the Wawel Cathedral (where Pope John Paul II was Archbishop) followed by free time. The day concluded with an evening tour of the Wieliczka Salt Mine, which was built in the 13th century and produced table salt continuously until 2007. Day 3 in Kraków was a somber experience as the group visited the Kazimierz District en route to the Schindler Factory, which is a WWII in Poland museum now, and then the Auschwitz prison camps.

The bus trip from Kraków to Prague was livened up with a short stop in Olomouc, Czech Republic, a quaint eastern Czech town. Day 2 in Prague featured a tour of sights including Castle Hill and St. Vitus Cathedral, the “Golden Lane” and the Charles Bridge into Old Town Square followed by free time. Day 3 featured an excursion to Kutná Hora and its famous silver mine, stopping first at the Bone Church (Sedlec Ossuary) in Kostnice.

The group then traveled on to Vienna, where they saw Vienna University, the Town Hall (Rathaus), Parliament, and the Museum quarter, and then climbed up St. Stephen’s tower. Day 2 in Vienna started with sightseeing, including a stop at Hundertwasser Village and ending at Schönbrunn Palace. Our final afternoon was free to enjoy Vienna’s ambiance before heading back to the hotel to pack. We departed from Vienna, transitioning again through Charles de Gaulle Airport before landing in Detroit for our connecting flight home.

Right: Jon Comer at the Citadella overlooking the Danube River flowing through Budapest



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# GEOGRAPHERS IN THE FIELD



Left: A recognizable scene from the movie *Schindler's List* in the Kazimierz District of Kraków



Left: The view from Prague's Town Hall Tower

Below: Tom Wikle, Nguyen Le, and Keeley Heise at Vienna's Belvedere Gardens

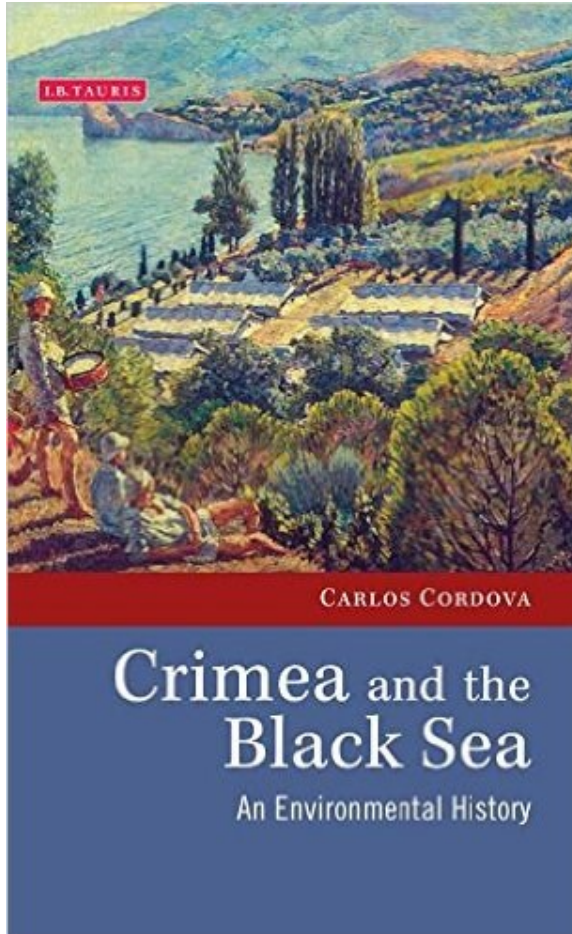


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# GEOGRAPHERS IN THE FIELD

CARLOS CORDOVA: A new book about Crimean geography, history, and archaeology



The author at one of the two road accesses to the Peninsula across the Sivash Lagoon. The site is now a *de facto* international border between Russia and Ukraine.

Recently published by I.B. Tauris, London, *Crimea and the Black Sea: An environmental history* is Carlos Cordova's recent book (Hardcover with a jacket).

From the front cover flap:

The Crimean Peninsula has a rich and complex environmental history. The Black Sea in particular has had a major impact on nearly all aspects of Crimea's natural and cultural history. Carlos Cordova explains the making of Crimea's natural environment, from its geology and relief to its climate and soils. He explores the rich flora and fauna of the peninsula, including the biogeographical isolation of Crimea, the transformation of the landscape brought about by Mediterranean farmers, as well as Khrushchev's Virgin Lands Campaign, which saw virtually all the steppe turned into cropland. The development of the south coast as a tourist destination and the pollution brought about by agricultural and industrial development are also discussed. This pioneering study represents the first modern work in the English language on the environmental history of a little known but environmentally significant region.

From the back cover flap:

Carlos Cordova is Professor of Geography, Oklahoma State University. As well as researching the environmental history of the Crimean peninsula, including its geoarchaeological, paleoecological and biogeographical aspects, he has also undertaken fieldwork in the Middle East, USA, Mexico, and South Africa and is the author of *Millennial Landscapes in Jordan: Geoarchaeology and Cultural Ecology* (2007).



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# GEOGRAPHERS IN THE FIELD

## REBECCA SHEEHAN: Field Research

In fall 2014, I was on sabbatical in New Orleans, doing archival research on public space and animals in the city. In this work, I am interested in understanding the intersections of how animal “nuisances,” pets, and legislation shape and impart meaning to public space. I also began a new ethnographic project on an all-female marching krewes who parade during Mardi Gras (and other events throughout the year). I aim to understand the connections these krewes make with other New Orleanian parading traditions and the meaning krewes members make in their participation, specifically concerning gender and identity. In July, 2015, I was awarded a New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation Archive Fellowship to help fund this research. My recorded interviews and transcripts will be archived with the Foundation for public use. Both research projects continue.



All-female krew participating in the Krewe de Boo parade, October 2014. Photo by Rebecca Sheehan.



This summer I taught a two-week summer course in Taos, New Mexico, in conjunction with Oklahoma State University’s Doel Reed Center for the Arts. Five graduate and two undergraduate students participated in doing ethnographic field work concerning the Taos Plaza, the Pueblo, and the Earthship Community’s cultural landscapes. Students critically examined the politics of place and group identities of Anglos, Hispanics, and Native Americans. Together, we have begun to analyze our data and work on a manuscript to submit for academic publication.

Students at Earthship school building (under construction), June 2015. Photo by Rebecca Sheehan.



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# GEOGRAPHERS IN THE FIELD

## JACQUELINE VADJUNEC: Land System Vulnerability

My sabbatical and summer went by way too quickly! I spent much time in both Cimarron, OK and Union, NM counties, with Todd Fagin (OU) and Nicole Colston (OSU), talking to ranchers and agriculturalists about the impacts of drought on their land-use and livelihoods. In May, Nicole and I started the oral history component of the research project. In August, Todd and I spent some time at the Union County fair, talking to kids about frontier agriculture and the region's rich history. We also got to see lots of familiar faces and talk to folks about all the rain they have been getting! Lastly, Todd and I had the pleasure of speaking at the North East Soil and Water Conservation's district's board meeting. It is always extremely gratifying to give back usable results (maps, data, and GIS layers) to communities where we work! Fieldwork can be tough, but the team got to eat some wonderful New Mexican food, as well as to listen to some amazing life histories. All in all, it was another great field season!



A cow beside the road in Kenton, OK.



An auto body shop in Boise City, OK.



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# GEOGRAPHERS IN THE FIELD



On the road to Kenton, OK.



Dust Bowl House, Felt, OK.



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# DEPARTMENTAL GATHERINGS

## 2014 Christmas Party

Jon and Shannon Comer hosted the departmental Christmas Party on December 7, 2014. Much good food was shared, fun presents were exchanged, stolen, and/or hidden, and everyone was riding high from the previous day's Bedlam victory in Norman.



It was no puzzle what was the favorite activity – Snoopy Puzzles! Emily Ellis, Kimberly Johnson, Keeley Heise, Clay Barrett, and Jordan (aka Paul Bunyan – see below) Brasher finish an easy one while Dale Lightfoot looks on.



The 500-piece puzzle required professional help – Dr. Amy Frazier – but in the end was just too much to complete in the time available. Maybe next year!



# DEPARTMENTAL GATHERINGS



Amanda Weber, Lauren Wood, and Alyson Greiner patiently wait for the Gift Exchange to start.



Gangsta' Ugly Sweater winner, Dale Lightfoot.

Emily Ellis hopes for a good present in a small package.



Jordan Brasher opens a gift.

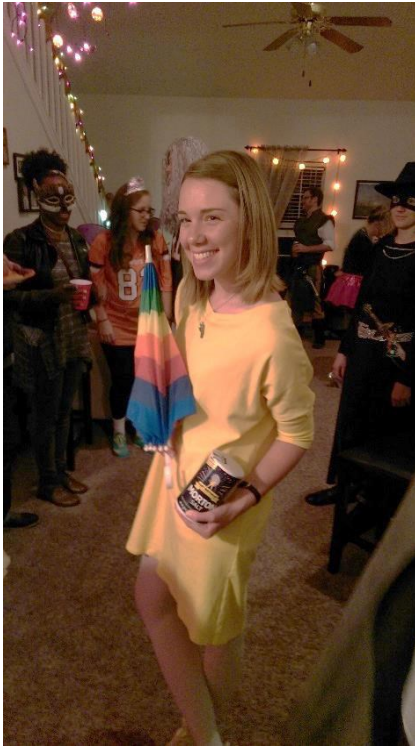


# DEPARTMENTAL GATHERINGS

## 2015 Halloween Party

The Halloween Party was Friday, October 30, at the home of Dr. Emily Fekete.

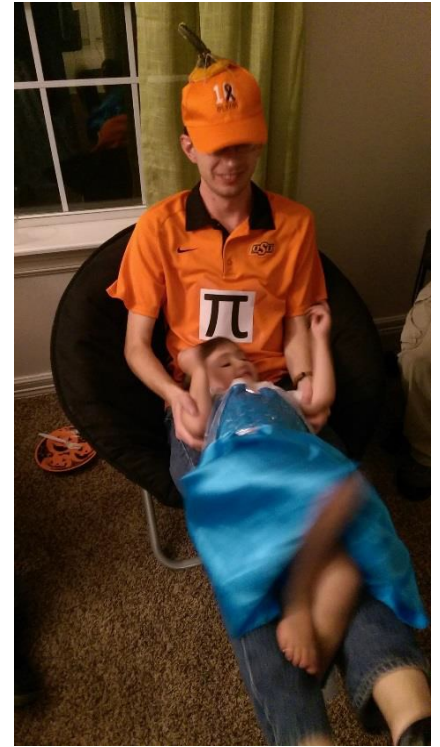
First Place: Emily Ellis



Second Place: Dr. and Mrs. Mathews



Third Place: Nick Rose



Jon and Shannon Comer



Lauren Wood



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# DEPARTMENTAL GATHERINGS



# G E O G R A P H Y



Keeley Heise



Drs. Sheehan and Frazier



Spooky treats rounded out the evening!

# ALUMNI NEWS & MEMORIES

**BARBARA BEST (M.S. 2000)** moved to Australia after completing her Master's degree from OSU in 2000. Since then, she has worked for a few different companies in software, technical support, business development, team leadership, and management. Today, Barbara is still passionate about spatial data, GIS, GPS, and spatial technology. She manages the Victorian and Tasmanian operations for the Surveying and Spatial Sciences Institute (SSSI), the Australian peak body for the spatial industry with over 2,000 members in Australia and overseas. In her spare time, she loves the beach, playing tennis, and watching her son play baseball. Contact Barbara at [1Barbwired@gmail.com](mailto:1Barbwired@gmail.com).

**PATRICK BRILEY (B.S. 1986):** I am currently the Army Reserve Command Engineer and Director of Installation Management in Washington DC. I live in Stafford, Virginia with my wife Stacy and two daughters Spencer Abigail and Grayson Isabella. My job responsibilities take me all over the world providing facility and infrastructure support to the US Army. I am contemplating retirement and a move back to Oklahoma within the next 18 months and would love to move to Stillwater, where I met my wife (at Tumbleweeds of course), and where I could send my daughters to a great school.

COL Patrick O. Briley  
Director, AR Installation Management Directorate (ARIMD)  
6075 Goethals Road, Bldg 1908  
Fort Belvoir, VA 22060  
703-806-6790 (Belvoir office)  
910-570-8354 (Bragg office)  
703-541-9530 (BB)  
[Patrick.O.Briley.mil@mail.mil](mailto:Patrick.O.Briley.mil@mail.mil)



**GLENN CARVER (M.S. 1983):** It is thirty three years since I left OSU and yet Oklahoma is stamped in me. My friends all know of my USA experience and everyone remembers the name Oklahoma. My children have grown up with the stories and bought me an ornamental black and orange OSU football helmet and an Eskimo Joe's T shirt. I still drink coffee in an orange pottery mug bought in the student union though the Pistol Pete logo is long gone.

I flew in to New York on my first ever flight. I got the Greyhound from New York to Tulsa and a local bus brought me to the Hall of Fame Plaza. I stepped down and stood with my suitcase bewildered and blasted in the August heat. It was all so strange and I took time to adjust. I could not drive, walked everywhere striding past the relaxed locals to arrive in a pool of perspiration. The people in the department were universally courteous and helpful; the professors and their families took it in turns to host events for the graduates. I will always remember their kindness and hospitality and can only look back and say thank you. The graduate program was harder work than I expected. On top of that there was the teaching assistantship and the introduction to human geography. There they were in front of me, a wall of Oklahoma humanity: fraternity boys and sorority girls, football players, cowboys, regulars and oddballs, interested and disinterested. In front of them some unintelligible guy from the north of England. I settled in. I played Soccer for the university team. We were a mixed bag of Americans, Latin Americans, and Middle East students. Our captain was a Scottish Geology professor and Colin Ankersen, the OSU football kicker, played for us. We won the Oklahoma league and cup and played in Big 8 competitions in Nebraska and Kansas. I scored a goal in Nebraska that, to my undisguised delight, was shown on Nebraska State TV in front of two cornhuskers and a dog....

I bought a season ticket for the football and went to basketball. My first ever basketball game was the night when OSU beat national champions Louisville. The winning basket was scored from the half way line on the last throw of the game that secured Eddie "half court" Hannon "You Tube" immortality. I was also at the wrestling for a fantastic brawl with the Sooners that started in the ring and spread to the whole team.

(Continued on next page)



# ALUMNI NEWS & MEMORIES

And of course there was the Strip. There was turtle racing at the Mason Jar. I liked to go to Wild Willie's and see Dub Cross and his country swing band. Mainly I went to Eskimo Joe's off the strip which back then was just two small rooms one atop the other. I also saw U2 in a tiny club in OKC on their first USA tour and Waylon Jennings at a huge country festival. I supplemented my income with work as a soccer coach, a women's soccer referee, painted the halls of residence one summer and worked in Maxine's picture frame shop on the Strip. A portrait of John Wayne was the most popular picture to frame.

Larry Perkins in Sociology took me on a field trip to McCurtain County on the Arkansas border in remote dense forested hill and holler terrain. A man greeted us on his porch with a shotgun cradled and we met others who visited the dry good store every few months to stock up. Another world. One day I am cycling home when a siren goes off. Guys at the motor cycle show room run to get the bikes inside. It is my first tornado warning and I am too far from the brick built security of campus. In my little wood frame apartment I get in the bath tub and pull a mattress over my head and I wait. I wait for a very long time then I get out. I look out of the window and my neighbours are on their roof with a telescope, drinking beers. They watched the tornado pass west of town while I missed it all in the dark under that mattress.

There was so much more: but especially the friendship of the other graduates: a Christmas trip to the Grand Canyon and California in 1980 with Bob Sweet and Bart Mullins, a lift to Springfield, Missouri with Eric Constance before a hitch hike to Boston and New York. The return hitchhike via Louisville to stay with Claudia Craig. At the end Kelly Fox let me stay to finish my dissertation when my tenancy expired. The department secretary Frances Hays was my "other mother" who helped when I struggled with the distance and culture.

I look back at the value of an International Student experience and it is through the OSU Geography department that I gained that experience. I have to thank Dr. Hecock for opening the door for me and thanks also are due to Drs. Rooney, Stadler, Tweedie, Walsh, Vitek, Carney, Stine and Gayle Maxwell. A special mention to Dr. Keith Harries who I have written to for thirty years and who supported me all the way though.

Some days, though not often in London, there is a clear blue high pressure sky with the air clean, crisp and still, and it takes me back to Oklahoma.



Geography graduate students, ca. 1981, (left to right) Claudia Craig, Glenn Carver, unknown, Vickie Lord, Larry Bunse (wearing a "Frank" nametag swapped with another student), Pete Bracchi, Mike Mereness (photo by Keith Harries).



# ALUMNI NEWS & MEMORIES

**DENNIS CHAPPABITTY (B.S. 1972):** I live with my wife, Linda, in Elk Grove, CA about 10 miles south of downtown Sacramento. I practice federal employment law and Indian law throughout the United States. Our frequent business trips to the remote Eastern Sierra high desert at Benton Hot Springs resulted in my appointment to the “Historic Benton Hot Springs”, a nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation created in July 2012, with the purpose of preserving the historic and natural properties located on the 1,255 acre Benton Hot Springs Ranch and town site and to keep the land and hot springs accessible for lawful educational, charitable, agricultural, and scientific public purposes. I want to hold an Ancient Indian Rock Art conference soon under the auspices of our nonprofit organization. I have explored many petroglyph sites known to the general public and others in undisclosed locations to protect them from vandalism or theft. The Benton Hot Springs region, south of Mono Lake and near the Nevada/California border north of Bishop, CA, is amazingly abundant with spectacular rock art depictions thousands of years old. The local Paiute People took Linda and me to the secret site where this picture was taken in December 2014. I invite all Zenith readers to visit this geothermal region and stay over at the Benton Hot Springs Bed & Breakfast.



**TONI CONNELLY (B.S. 1995):** In May, I and a faculty member took 14 OSU Engineering students on a 2 week Study Abroad trip to Ireland. We visited the areas around Dublin, Waterford, Cork, and Galway. It's such a beautiful country, but I must say the area around Connemara was my favorite, especially Kylemore Abbey! I had a blast with the students!



Toni Connelly at the Rock of Cashel

**PAT DOLAN (M.S. 1990):** It's all change in the Dolan household with Ruth (13 years) now at High School and Joseph (9 years) at Middle School with their associated bus travel to the next town which is 8 miles away. In November 2014, Angela took up a part time position at Screwfix (a UK DIY chain) and juggles this with her school commitments including being a Governor at the First School where Ruth and Joseph attended as well as being an exam invigilator. Ruth would eventually like to become a microbiologist and has chosen subjects at High School to support this. Angela and I need to find a way of getting Ruth's iPhone surgically removed from her ear! Thankfully Joseph has transitioned well to Middle School. Joseph wants to be an electronic games developer for Microsoft and plays football (soccer) all the time both outdoors and indoors as well as swimming. Family holidays this year have been Cape Verde (which is becoming a good annual habit) and, in late October, it'll be a short hop to Spain for a break over school half-term. Angela and I have just celebrated our 22<sup>nd</sup> wedding anniversary. Work at Mott MacDonald, now been with them almost 13 years, during 2015 has been entirely focussed on the UK with disappointingly no foreign trips as previously. Greatest work focus over this period has been to successfully transition certification from ISO 27001:2005 to ISO 27001:2013. Seem to spend an ever increasing amount of time on trains visiting our UK offices regarding my Information Security remit and estimate that I've clocked-up around 25,000 miles on trains in the last 12 months. Despite now being back in the UK since 1990, I nevertheless fondly look upon the great times I had at OSU and the lifelong friendships that were established then.



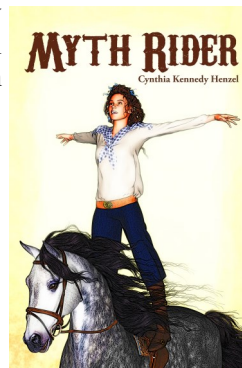


# ALUMNI NEWS & MEMORIES

**DAVID FLING (B.S. 1981):** Now in my 4<sup>th</sup> year of as CEO/Owner (11 years in the business) of ITEX in Tulsa. Virtual currency businesses helping small to mid-size businesses leverage their cost of business, while creating an additional revenue stream for them. It's a national barter system. My geography background has been a wonderful benefit to this business. It's quite the "Worldly" degree, which also allowed me to experience 8 years in the satellite communications business working for ESPN as well as another 10 years in television. Married to a USC Grad, CFO of Northwestern Mutual office in Tulsa, and we have five children. Currently have two kids in the business world, two as Sophomores at O-State, one more that will graduate HS in 3 years. Go Pokes!

**CYNTHIA HENZEL (M.S. 1991) and JERRY HENZEL (M.S. 1990):** Jerry Henzel continues to work as an ICT consultant for the World Bank and IFC. He is currently involved in projects in Central America, the Caribbean, Philippines and Nepal. Cynthia Kennedy Henzel published her 50th book this year, MYTH RIDER, an historical fiction that takes place in the country of Georgia and the 101 Ranch - not that far from Stillwater. They currently live in Tucson, AZ.

Cynthia's business: [www.cynthiakennedyhenzel.com](http://www.cynthiakennedyhenzel.com)  
Jerry's business: [www.precipicedevelopment.com](http://www.precipicedevelopment.com)



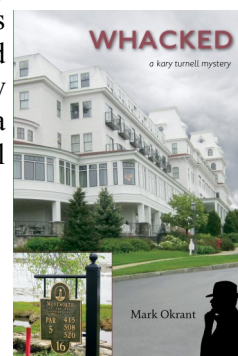
Cover of Cynthia's novel, Myth Rider.

**CHRIS HORACEK (M.S. 1981):** All is well with Chris and Cheryl Horacek. As recent empty nesters we have taken up cycling on a tandem road bike, mostly riding around the SE USA – but did ride 500 miles across Nebraska this year. Cheryl is in year seven of working with special needs young adults as they transition into the workforce. Chris is in year 5 with BravoSolution (Italian supply chain business) and has been involved with major projects with The Home Depot, International Paper, Mondelez and Dover Corporation.

Kids are all busy. Maggie finished a Master's in counselling and has started work with one of the local medical centers. Kailey is finishing up her Bachelor's at Towson University (Maryland) and is interning with an internet-based photography business. Alyssa is doing a study abroad in Valencia Spain for a year. Set up well and hope to visit her again this spring. Christopher recently was appointed as manager at Forest Grove ram in Sandersville, GA. He will be working directly with the owner of the only organic sheep operation in the Southeast as well as managing their vegetable production and market operations.

Hope all is well with our fellow Cowboys.

**MARK OKRANT (Ed.D. 1975):** Following 37 years as professor of tourism management and director of the Institute for New Hampshire Studies at Plymouth State University, Mark will retire in December. He intends to continue writing his Kary Turnell Mysteries, and has joined with an economist to form The OakLee Consulting Group, LLC. Mark and Marla recently moved from their long-time Plymouth residence, and are now living at a 55-plus community in Loudon, NH. Their daughter Robyn is a performance artist in Los Angeles, while Elisabeth is pursuing a PhD in Social Policy at Brandeis University.



Cover of one of Mark's novels.



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# ALUMNI NEWS & MEMORIES

**GAIL PICKENS-BARGER (B.S. 1981):** I'm sitting down here in the corner of Texas in Port Neches! I've been retired from DuPont/Conoco for many years now, and I am on my 15th year of teaching yoga. It's my fifth year to teach chair yoga for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. My oldest celebrates her 30th year near Thanksgiving, and we are going on a family vacation to Disney World. I think my 9 and 30 year old will enjoy it the best, though. I dropped by OSU this past summer, and I noted all the campus changes! I think the only thing that hasn't changed maybe is the library and the Seretean Center (and the Stonewall Tavern, Eskimo Joe's was only a bar when I attended school there in the late 70's). When I attended OSU the Geography Department was on the third floor (or was it the fourth...) of the Home Ec Building, and the Center for the Applications for Remote Sensing was on the fourth floor of the Engineering Building. I was recently on LinkedIn having various discussions on GIS systems for Geologists, and there were a lot of people on the forum remembering the older PDP-11 computer systems that ran the NASA Landsat software we used in the CARS lab. Fun stuff! One of the Geography courses I took was the 3 week class in the Colorado mountains. When I visited my daughter when she was in the Peace Corps in Mongolia, the Gobi Desert reminded me so much about that particular course in the Geography Department! I hope to sometime visit the new stomping grounds!



Left: Here's Amber and I in our Eskimo Joe's Shirts standing on a glacier in the Gobi Desert National Park.



Above: Of course, one always has to do a camel ride when in the Gobi!

**JESS PORTER (M.S. 2002; Ph.D. 2007):** Coordinator of Geography at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR), was promoted to Associate Professor this year. His fourth and final 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 Meteorology: Interactive Explorations of Earth Using Google Earth](#). Jess continues to do research on the Dust Bowl. He co-authored an article with the famous geographer, Carlos Cordova, which is forthcoming in *The Holocene*. He continues to serve as co-curator of the National Endowment for the Humanities-funded traveling exhibit *Dust, Drought, and Dreams Gone Dry*. The project will continue to tour the country through 2016. Jess also pursues research on residential segregation and stays busy speaking on the topic in Arkansas. At UALR, Jess teaches a wide variety of courses, heads departmental acquisition and destruction of technology (we loved you Drone!), and leads study abroad trips. In the spring, he will co-lead UALR's first trip to South Korea. The Porter family (Leslie, Claire (12), Abbie (10), Cole (1) and dogs Bessie and Carlie) remain busy, happy, and healthy.



# ALUMNI NEWS & MEMORIES



**VIRAWAN SOMBUTSIRI (GEOG M.S. 1980; COE Ed.D. 1984):** Hello from Thailand. Following is an update of my life in 2015: After my retirement in 2009 from the directorship of the Environmental Division of the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT), I was given the most valuable opportunity to be part of the largest and first hydropower project on the mainstream of the Lower Mekong River in Lao PDR. As an advisor for the environmental implications of the project, I have really enjoyed working in this multinational group of world class engineers, mostly from Europe. This 1,285 MW run-of-river barrage is being constructed in Xayaburi Province, northern region of Lao PDR. This year is the beginning of the second stage of construction phases. We have already completed the first stage construction in 2014 completing some major project components such as the navigation lock, the seven surface spillway gates, the four low-level outlet gates for riverbed sediment flushing, and part of the intermediate block which separates the spillways and the powerhouse section. Starting in early 2015, the work is in progress for the construction of the eight units of powerhouse, the power takeoff structure, the fish passage facilities and the 500kV transmission line system. The Xayaburi Hydroelectric Power Project will be totally completed and scheduled for commercial operation on October 19, 2019. So my life after retirement is quite exciting with challenging work. To be responsible for the power project environmental and social safeguards really keeps me busy with reporting and extensive travelling. To be involved in the designing and construction of the world's largest fish passage facilities on the Lower Mekong River has taken me to visit firsthand the current fish passage facilities in Europe and in the USA. The environmental management in the construction area has now been more of a routine work and in compliance with local laws, regulations and requirements. My continual work also involves the development of the fish biomass monitoring in the Mekong River for baseline data before the operation of the XHPP fish passage facilities in 2019. With several fishery experts from the World Renown Consulting Company, we are certainly confident that the XHPP's fish passage facilities (Fish ladder + fish locks + fishways), when completed, will be effectively responded and will accommodate the fishery resources and ecosystem of the Mekong River. I and my husband are still enjoying living in Bangkok. Being a childless family, we also enjoy occasional travelling for short vacations in the country and other parts of the world and welcome our friend visitation to Thailand from time to time.

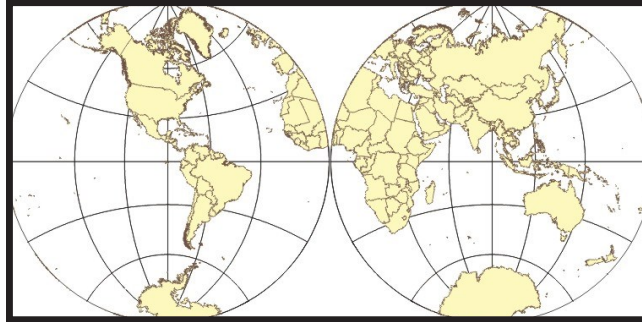


VS at the project resettlement village.



VS showing the catch of the day at Mekong River.

**EDIZ ÜNAL (M.S. 1998):** I am enjoying life with my family in Ankara, Turkey. I've been continuing my services at Ministry of Agriculture. My wife is still working in her dental clinic. As for my daughter, she grows fast and is now in high school 2nd grade. Last summer was enjoyable for the whole family—we took a bus trip to some Balkan countries (Macedonia, Bulgaria and Greece). I especially liked the city of Ohrid which is tourist oriented with narrow charming streets invaded by many shopping huts. Near Lake Ohrid, there are lots of souvenir shops, restaurants, bars, clubs and places for anyone to visit. I recommend everyone see this lovely city. Best wishes to former geography alumni and faculty.



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.