



GeoNews

Southwest Texas State University Department of Geography Newsletter vol 7, issue 2, Spring 2001

Alumni Reunion and Student Celebration: Wonderfully FREE! Saturday, April 21, 2001

Fred M. Shelley



The 7th Annual Alumni Reunion and Student Celebration will be held on Saturday, April 21, 2001. All current and former students, faculty, staff, and friends of the department are cordially invited to attend.

This year's Reunion and Celebration will feature two new venues. The activities will begin

in newly remodeled Centennial Hall. The program will include an Earth Day presentation sponsored by the SWT chapter of the National Association of Environmental Professionals; discussion of the state of the department by Lawrence Estaville, Department Chair, and recognition of the retirement of longtime faculty member Sent Visser. Departmental scholarships and awards will also be presented. Special awards for Outstanding Leadership will be given to Dr. Ronald Abler, Executive Director of the Association of American Geographers, and Dr. J. Michael Willoughby, Dean of the Graduate College. Robert Larsen will present this year's Outstanding Alumni Awards to Vincent Nacewski and Joe Cruseturner. An informal lunch will be served during this portion of the program.



see *Wonderfully Free*, pg. 8

THE MICHAEL YOUNG GRADUATE SEMINAR ROOM

Lawrence Estaville

In honor of Mr. Michael Young, geography alumnus and generous benefactor, SWT Geography will dedicate its graduate seminar room as the Michael Young Geography Graduate Seminar Room. The dedication will take place during the department's Seventh Annual Alumni Reunion and Student Celebration on April 21. Mr. Young has pledged \$100,000 to help fund 20 geography scholarships.

XINNONG ZHOU RECEIVES PH.D.

Fred M. Shelley



On December 22, 2000, Xinnong Zhou became the department's third Ph.D. recipient and the first international student to

receive a doctorate from SWT. Under the supervision of Ben Zhan, Xinnong wrote his doctoral dissertation entitled "Geographic Concentrations of Lung Cancer Mortality in Texas and Their Relationships to Environmental & Socioeconomic Conditions."

Xinnong and his wife, Shanshan, have recently moved to Redlands, California, where Xinnong has begun work as a research analyst for ESRI, the world's leading producer of GIS software. In addition, on February 4, Xinnong and Shanshan had their first child, Zhou Zhou, at 19.5 in, 7 lbs, and 14 oz. Her English name is Emily. A well deserved congratulations from the entire department!

GeoNews is a semiannual publication of the Southwest Texas State University Department of Geography

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Greetings From The Chair

Lawrence Estaville



What can I say about your Geography Department when it hosted Jack Dangermond, president of ESRI (the most important GIS software company in the world) as the third Lovell Lecture (Astronaut Jim Lovell—Apollo 13 fame—came back for the event!), gained membership into the prestigious University Consortium for Geographic Information Science (other members include M.I.T., Penn State, Ohio State, and the Oak Ridge National Laboratory!), and graduated in December its first international Ph.D. student, Xinnong Zhou!! Well, I can say that Jack

Dangermond gave a simply superb presentation about his global vision for GIS before a packed and excited house in the Alkek Teaching Theater in December! Moreover, I can say that, in honor of the memory of their daughter Sally Karnau, William and Eileen Karnau are generously supporting two new Geography scholarships! The supporters of the department's 26 scholarships will present them to our outstanding students at the Seventh Annual Alumni Reunion and Student Celebration on April 21. And I can say that Xinnong Zhou and his wife Shanshan moved to Redlands, California, where ESRI hired Xinnong as a senior researcher and where their daughter Zhou Zhou, another geographer, of course, was born on 4 February!! What a way to begin a new life in California!

The five academic research centers for which the department provides leadership continue to blossom: the Grosvenor Center for Geographic Education (Dick Boehm, director), which is planning to host U.S. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison as the fourth speaker in the Grosvenor Lecture series in Fall 2001; the James and Marilyn Lovell Center for Environmental Geography and Hazards Research (David Butler, director); the Center for Nature and Heritage Tourism (Jim Kimmel, director); the Freshwater Research and Policy Center (Joe Moore, director), and the Center for Texas-Mexico Applied Research (David Stea, director). As well, our Texas Watch Program (Eric Mendelman, coordinator) is reaching out to water quality volunteers across the state.

Your department now has 508 undergraduates, 152 masters, and 24 Ph.D. students and is the largest Geography Department in North America! Our students continue to participate enthusiastically in Gamma Theta Upsilon (GTU), the Student Planning Organization (SPO), the National Association of Environmental Professionals (NAEP), Support for Women in Geography (SWIG), and the Graduate Student Forum. Several of our students were once again honored during the past year with awards at national and state conferences or were congratulated for their publications! Indeed, underscoring the high quality of SWT Geography's graduate students since fall 1995 are these points: 1) professional organizations have recognized them with 27 awards and honors, 2) the students have published 42 book chapters and journal articles and 8 book reviews, and 3) they have given 156 scholarly presentations at professional meetings—a total five-year record of accomplishments better than many university departments. The total number of SWT Geography faculty is 29, the largest geography faculty in North America and the faculty with the largest number of women in the nation! Geography Department faculty have now published more than 1,000 publications, have been honored with 11 publication awards for outstanding books and articles, and have won 23 teaching awards from universities or national and state professional organizations! And, we now have a new Master of Science (M.S.) in Geography program, will soon bring on-line a GIS certificate program, and have created a new "slam-dunk," world-class Web site!

Angelika Lester continues to do a simply superb job as our department office manager! Joan Pasquali and Sandra Foglia, our new Administrative Assistant II with a warm smile, are excellent office staff who also make certain our ship stays on a steady course! In addition, without Dan "the computer man" Hemenway we would be dead in the water with the almost 350 department computers to be maintained!

You can see that I am very proud to be the chair of your department! You, too, should be very proud to be a part of your nationally recognized Department of Geography! Well, I could go excitedly on and on, but more details are in this newsletter, check out our Web site at www.geo.swt.edu, or get a copy of our video (for a copy of the video, call the department at 512-245-2170 or e-mail: geography@swt.edu). For "up close and personals," be here for your Seventh Annual Alumni Reunion and Student Celebration on April 21! See you and your families at this annual department highlight to join more than 600 other people having a day of fun and food, presenting student awards and scholarships, reminiscing, networking, attending workshops, examining vendor displays, enjoying jazz, salsa bands and glass-bottom boat rides, and seeing your department's new equipment and facilities! And this annual premier Geography event is free to current students and only \$10 for alumni!!!

Department Initiatives

Lawrence Estaville

UCGIS Comes to SWT

The University Consortium for Geographic Information Science (UCGIS) in its February 2001 semiannual meeting granted SWT membership into the nationally prestigious research and educational organization. Led by SWT Geography, particularly Ben Zhan, SWT joins such current members as Ohio State, Wisconsin, Penn State, MIT, Georgia Tech, and the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, in carrying out the three fundamental purposes of the UCGIS:

- 1) To serve as an effective, unified voice for the geographic information science research community
- 2) To foster multidisciplinary research and education
- 3) To promote the informed and responsible use of geographic information science and geographic analysis for the benefit of society.

ESRI University Site License

Led by the efforts of SWT Geography, SWT has purchased an ESRI site license that includes unlimited use of all software produced by the firm. This ESRI site license will enable the Geography Department to increase dramatically the access of GIS software for use by its students and faculty for teaching and research. Look for a listing of all the ESRI software on the department Web site.

New Look for SWT Geography's Web Site: "The New Geographer"

Using the latest in streaming, visualization, and sound techniques, SWT Geography will premier its "The New Geographer" Web site in the spring 2001 semester. This new "techno" theme underscores the department's strong commitment to staying at the cutting edge of technology. Check out the new Web site design beginning in March and all the added attractions and information, then let us know what you think: www.geo@swt.edu.

Crime Mapping with DPS

Ben Zhan and Lawrence Estaville continue their collaboration with the Texas Department of Public Safety in crime mapping. DPS granted the two researchers a \$50,000 start-up grant in fall 2000 to create the foundation for work regarding the use of GIS and mapping for crime analysis. Depending upon the state legislature's forthcoming budget, SWT Geography will play an increasingly important part in crime analysis for the state. For some basic crime maps using DPS data, see the department's Web site.

Still Geography After All These years, Not Paul Simon

Brock Brown, Undergraduate Program Coordinator



If you are one of the many alumni who have returned to attend a recent Alumni Reunion and Student Celebration, or even if your “keeping up” with the department has only been through these newsletters, it must be increasingly apparent that the hallway and classroom experience of undergraduate students today is quite different than years past, but it’s still geography after all these years. What was darn good is getting even better each year. From students to faculty to facilities, the undergraduate program continues to engage in self study and modification in order to meet the needs of undergraduates entering the work force or competing for graduate study positions. Below are some of the highlights drawn from our five-year Academic Program Review completed in October 2000 that emphasize the similarities in the undergraduate program over time and the ways in which it is changing.

We are still a very large department, and you can still make the claim that you graduated from the biggest geography program in the United States. The number of geography majors has remained high for the past five years. In 1995 there were 514 majors, and in 1999 the major count reached 529, the highest number for the five-year period. We continue to be a “mature” department with regard to our undergraduate majors. Over 70 percent of our majors are juniors or seniors, and this trend held steady for the five-year period. This student mix compares to about 50 percent for SWT as a whole and is due in part to the fact that few entering first-year students know much about geography, but many discover it once here—many of them while in Doc Augustini’s classes. Geography majors tend to be older than SWT students in general. A large number of geography majors are also employed full time, and many are parents of young children. With this in mind, we are especially pleased with high graduation and retention rates that indicate our students are successful in overcoming nonschool demands to pursue a degree in geography.

Pre-collegiate preparation and quality of our majors continues to increase. Mean SAT scores for Geography majors increased from 978 in 1996 to 1019 in 2000. At the same time the mean GPA remained fairly constant, increasing from 2.68 to 2.72, indicating that grade inflation is not a problem in the department. These trends were slightly higher than, but consistent with, Liberal Arts and SWT.

We are becoming a more diverse department. Female majors grew from 171 to 190, while the number of male majors decreased slightly. Overall ethnic diversity increased, but not as much as the department would like. Percent of “White” majors, according to the SWT fact book, decreased from 88.7 percent to 83.4 percent but still is overwhelmingly dominant among our majors. Categories of increase were Hispanic and American Indian. African-American majors declined from 8 to 5. This decrease is reflective of the field of professional geography in general, but the department is striving to find ways to attract more underrepresented groups into geography.

see Undergraduate, pg. 12

Living La Vida GEO, Not Ricky Martin

Fred M. Shelley, Graduate Program Coordinator



Recently, the department underwent a five-year Academic Program Review. Reviews of this sort, while time-consuming, give us a valuable opportunity to reflect on what we have accomplished as well as to consider where we are going. In his column, my colleague and Undergraduate Program Coordinator, Dr. Brock Brown, has identified some of the highlights of the review as applied to our outstanding undergraduate program. Following his initiative, my purpose in this column is to present some of the highlights of the graduate program during the last five years.

The past five years have been an exciting time for graduate work in Geography at SWT. Three new programs—the Ph.D. in Environmental Geography, the Ph.D. in Geographic Education, and the Master of Science—have been established, and all are thriving. Our first graduating Ph.D. students—Lisa DeChano, Todd Votteler, and Xinnong Zhou—have completed their doctorates and are active in the professional work force. A fourth new program, the proposed Ph.D. in Geographic Information Science, is in preparation and, if approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, will begin to admit students in the fall 2002.

By no means has our long-established and innovative Master of Applied Geography been neglected. Between 1995 and 2000, more than 160 persons, or more than two-thirds of the students completing graduate work in department history, were awarded MAG degrees. Our MAG alumni are making great progress in careers throughout Texas and across the country in government service, the private sector, education, and many other professions. We have achieved this success, moreover, in conjunction with a dramatic increase in the qualifications of incoming students. Our master’s and Ph.D. students have degrees from prestigious colleges and universities across the United States and around the world. The average GRE score of incoming graduate students has risen by nearly 200 points in the past five years. Our students have made great progress in publishing and presenting their research to professional meetings. Over the past five years, our graduate students have achieved more than 50 publications, including articles in prestigious journals such as *Physical Geography*, the *Journal of Geography*, and *Environmental Science*. This publication record is better than those of many entire geography departments! Students have given more than 150 professional presentations, and have won 27 awards for their excellent work.

We have also seen a dramatic improvement in the quality of student life. The Graduate Student Forum is a thriving organization. This year, the Forum organized a workshop on PowerPoint presentation and established the “Graduate Guardians” mentoring program. Graduate students have played important leadership roles in Supporting Women in Geography (SWIG), the National Association of Environmental Professionals (NAEP), and Gamma Theta Upsilon (GTU).

see Graduate, pg. 12

Faculty News

Sent Visser Bids Farewell

Carley Pilgrim



SWT Geography bids farewell to one of its most beloved and longtime members of our "Geography Family." Sent Visser, after twenty-two years of service to the department, will retire in May 2001. He leaves SWT after long dedication to the field of geography and the countless number of students he taught.

Sent Visser was born in the Netherlands, in 1947. At the young age of four, his family migrated to New Zealand, which is where, some believe, he picked up his funny accent. He was raised on a real sheep farm, where the men are men and the sheep are sheared. Young Sent ventured to the city of Auckland, where he received his bachelors and masters degrees. In 1970, he crossed the seas and dove into Ohio State University's Ph.D. Program and the American culture.

While working toward his Ph.D., the strapping Sent met his future wife, Mary Hale, who was working toward a Masters of Fine Arts degree. They married, and in 1975 the couple moved to Texas.. Sent went to work at Southwest Texas State University in 1978, and Mary began teaching at Southwestern University in Georgetown.

During Dr. Visser's long dedication to the department of Geography, he has filled the roles of many. He told me stories of "the old days of geography" when he would teach five classes a semester. He served as Graduate Program Coordinator from 1991 to 1994, and is proud to have been a "big part of the extraordinary development of the Graduate Program." Although his specialty is in agricultural geography, he has taught economic geography and many other courses for the duration of his career at SWT. Sent acknowledges one regret in Geography by not publishing more. However, he has spent his entire career in the classroom, teaching future geographers. His proudest professional achievement is one of our very own. Debbie Bryan was a student of Visser's. He encouraged her through her education, and now she is one of our most inspiring instructors (Good job, ol' chap!).

Although his career at SWT has been a critical and passionate component in Dr. Visser's life, one must simply walk into his office to see there is much more in his heart. Blessed with three children, Sent is a beaming father. Their first child, Adriana Samantha was born in 1976. "When I first saw her, I fell in love like I never had before" he exclaims! Unfortunately, Adriana was born with San Filippo Syndrome, a lysosomal sugar storage disease. She required tremendous medical care all of her precious, brief life and died on September 12, 1988 at the age of twelve. In her honor, Sent and Mary have established an Adriana Samantha Visser Geography Scholarship for students who care for disabled children. The impact of this loss still hauntingly prevails in the face of Sent Visser.



Due to the possibility of having other disabled children, Sent and Mary decided to adopt. In June 1987, Dirk Sent became part of the family. Six years later, the couple adopted another child, Marieke Adriana. Both kids are soccer players, and Sent claims himself quite the "soccer dad." Dirk plays the flute, and, according to her father, Marieke, now six, is a wonderful artist. "They are my proudest achievements," Sent expressed.

Around here, Sent is known for other extracurricular activities. Any of you remember his Pub Crawls? Originally a tradition of New Zealand, a Pub Crawl is a graduation ritual where "beer is one of their religions," explains Sent. Here at SWT, the Pub Crawl was a little more subdued, although I have no doubt that the spirit of the Crawl was strong and plentiful. The biggest problem was that "these Texans didn't understand that you're not supposed to take your truck to every pub. That's why it is called a crawl." In addition, I hear a farewell Pub Crawl will be taking place in Sent's honor on Friday night April 20 just before the Alumni Reunion and Student Celebration on April 21.



So, what is ahead for Sent Visser? Although recently undergoing a double by-pass operation, Sent has a positive outlook. He returned to work within weeks of his surgery and looks forward to the rest of the semester. He is organizing a river-rafting trip in the Grand Canyon this summer, and really enjoys playing in the stock market. He will watch his kids grow up, continue to do research and work in the field, and hopes to publish his Theory in Agricultural Geography. "Geography is a web of explanations," states Visser.

So farewell you Dutch-Kiwi-Texan, our friend, colleague, and devoted teacher. Your legacy shall prevail, your lessons have been well learned, and how could we forget all the sheep jokes!

Visiting International Scholar: Dr. Ricardo Garcia Mira from Spain

During spring 2001 semester, SWT Geography is being honored by the visit, for two months, of Dr. Ricardo Garcia Mira, Associate Professor of Social and Environmental Psychology at the University of A Coruna, Spain. Hosted by both the department and the Center for Texas-Mexico Applied Research, Dr. Mira is assisting international aspects of the work of the department and the Center on environmental cognition and spatial perception. Ricardo Mira was the principal organizer of the Sixth Spanish Congress of Environmental Psychology held in A Coruna in December 1998, at which David Stea and Sidney Brower (University of Maryland) were keynote speakers. Dr. Mira is also a member of the organizing committee for the Seventh Congress, held at San Sebastian in the Basque Country in May 2001. He is the author of more than two dozen published works in basic and applied social science. While visiting at SWT, Dr. Mira is engaged in collaborative research with David Stea and Dennis Kerkman of SWT's Department of Psychology.

Department News

Grosvenor Center to Co-sponsor International Symposium

Richard Boehm, Director

In cooperation with the International Geographical Union-Commission on Geographic Education, the Gilbert M. Grosvenor Center for Geographic Education will sponsor the "International Symposium on Geographic Education: Theory, Research, and Practice" at Southwest Texas State University in May 2001. The focus of the upcoming symposium will be issues involved in teaching geography in higher education, as well as K-12 school geography.

David Stea and James Petersen will lead a five-day post-conference field excursion to explore the cultural, physical, economic, political, and environmental geography of northern Mexico. Co-hosted by the Grosvenor Center and SWT's Center for Texas-Mexico Applied Research, this trip will include visits to Nuevo Laredo, Santa Catarina and the Canyon of the Huasteca, Saltillo, Monterrey, Cascada Cola de Bavallo, and Ciudad Victoria. An academic exchange with scholars from Universidad Autonoma de Tamaulipas is also planned as part of this excursion.

SWT Geography faculty and students will offer a variety of local field excursions during the symposium. These events will include a walking tour of the San Marcos River green belt, an aerial field trip of the Hill Country and Blackland Prairie, an expedition to the Texas Gulf Coast, a river cruise to view the evening migration of bats in downtown Austin, and an exploration of the Blackland Prairie region. More information as it becomes available about these day trips will be posted on the Grosvenor Center Web site.

An invitation is extended to all SWT Geography alumni, along with current geography faculty and students, and other interested parties to participate in the May 2001 International Symposium on Geographic Education. For more information and registration materials, contact the Grosvenor Center for Geographic Education, Department of Geography, Southwest Texas State University, 601 University Drive, San Marcos, Texas 78666. Voice: (512) 245-1823, Fax: (512) 245-1653, E-mail: jb42@swt.edu, Web: <http://www.geo.swt.edu/grosvenor/>.

Young Children's Space Perception

David Stea

The Geography department of Southwest Texas State University is now the center of an international research project involving the U.S., Mexico, the U.K., South Africa, and Iran. The project, which has been investigating how very young children learn to read, interpret, and use maps very early in life--prior to school-entering age--had its origins in research done at Clark University from the late 1960s through the early 1970s. Research then performed by the late Dr. James Blaut and SWT's David Stea using aerial photos and toy landscapes strongly suggested that children could comprehend geographic-scale spatial representations much earlier in the developmental sequence than previously supposed. The project led to experimental innovations in geographic education curricula in Massachusetts and Puerto Rico. The results of this phase of research are in the *Annals*, the *Journal of Geography, Environment and Behavior*, and a number of chapters in books published in the U.S. and the U.K., as well as in newspaper articles of the time.

The project re-initiated in the early 1990s, then involved the University of Illinois at Chicago, the University of Sheffield, and three Mexican universities, and is supported since by two grants from the National Science Foundation. In 1997 the new project began in the Spatial Learning Laboratory at SWT. Principal investigators in the most recent NSF-supported research have been James Blaut, who passed away in November 2000, David Stea, and Marites Pinon of SWT's Department of Psychology. This research, which is continuing, has involved present and former graduate and undergraduate geography students, including Marc LeFebre, Nancy Middlebrook, Vanessa Eckert, and Carley Pilgrim. Current research questions include the influence of social facilitation upon spatial learning and the ability of pre-schoolers to use maps to solve navigation problems in real environments.

Colloquium Lecture: Richard Francaviglia

David Stea

For the 2000-2001 SWT department of Geography Colloquium Series, SWT Geography is pleased and proud to have had as its guest Professor Richard Francaviglia, whose presentation was entitled "Landscape and History: Interpreting the Crosstimbers." A cultural/historical geographer with strong interests in architecture, urban design, and transportation, Richard Francaviglia is director of the Center for Greater Southwestern Studies and the History of Cartography at the University of Texas at Arlington. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Oregon in 1970, and has taught at the University of Minnesota, Antioch College, the University of Arizona, and Wittenberg University. His experience is not limited to academia, however; having held various positions in Arizona State planning and historic preservation agencies during the early 1980s, Francaviglia was later Ohio State Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer and Director of the Ohio Historical Society's Local History Office. The most recent of his six published books is *The Cast Iron Forest: A Natural and Cultural History of the North American Cross-Timbers*.

NAEP Takes Great Strides

Dave Taylor, NAEP President

This past semester, National Association of Environmental Professionals (NAEP), has become a more recognized and important leader at SWT. Without a doubt, the campus environmental community would accomplish few of its goals without the vision and competency of NAEP.

In addition to their on-going projects of campus wide recycling, river clean-ups, and environmental awareness, NAEP stepped up its work on the Environmental Service Fee (ESF). The then-NAEP President and ASG senator, Maggie Patay, envisioned the ESF a year ago. She worked with a fellow Associated Student Government (ASG) senator, Todd Curry, to introduce legislation enacting a student fee that applies to environmental projects and education on campus.

The two student leaders wrote a broad bill that defined the idea of a campus environmental fee, which the senators passed with the stipulation that revisions of the bill go into the final draft.

see NAEP, pg. 15

Department News

Third Annual Lovell Lecture Resounding Success with Jack Dangermond and Jim Lovell

David Butler, Director



The Third Annual Lovell Lecture, sponsored by the James and Marilyn Lovell Center for Environmental Geography and Hazards Research, was held on Monday, December 18, 2000. Mr. Jack Dangermond, founder and president of ESRI, the world's leading company in the development and applications of Geographic Information Systems software delivered the lecture. Captain Jim Lovell returned to SWT for the lecture, and help in introducing Mr.

Dangermond.

Preceding the lecture, Captain Lovell met with Center Scholars from the Lovell Center and held an engaging discussion about the Center's future, research, and direction. Our own Lawrence Estaville gave a departmental tour to Jack Dangermond and Jim Lovell, during which several Lovell Center Scholars were able to show some of their recent research efforts to our visitors. A photograph of Bob Larsen describing his work with municipal solid waste disposal to our visitors appeared in the next day's New Braunfels Herald-Zeitung, along with an accompanying story. The San Marcos Daily Record also provided excellent coverage of the event. Vice President Gerald Hill welcomed the audience attending the lecture on behalf of the SWT Administration. We greatly appreciate his support. Mr. Dangermond's lecture, delivered to a packed house in the Alkek Teaching Theatre, stressed the significance of both geography and geographic information systems in an increasingly interconnected world. After the lecture, Mr. Dangermond graciously answered questions from the audience, and he and Captain Lovell met with members of the audience who wished to visit with them personally.

On behalf of the Lovell Center, I would like to thank both Jack Dangermond and Captain Lovell for taking time out of their extremely busy schedules to participate in this year's lecture. Center Scholars, Dr. Estaville, our student workers and graduate students, and our fantastic office staff all helped in the preparations for, and carrying out, the event, and all deserve a hearty "Thank You!"

Jack Dangermond Again

Carley Pilgrim

Jack Dangermond sounds like a character from daytime television-- suave, debonair, and mysterious. However, the real Jack Dangermond, owner and inspiration of ESRI, Environmental Systems Research Institute, the world's largest Geographic Information System software company, is better in person than any character you will find on TV. The James and Marilyn Lovell Center for Environmental Geography and Hazards Research hosted its annual lecture in December 2000, featuring Mr. Dangermond. Although it was late in the semester (December 18), Mr. Dangermond had no trouble sparking an interest from his attentive audience. Mr. Dangermond presented new ideas for his significant company and pointed toward new directions for the future of geography through GIS. Jack Dangermond is truly visionary. The way he articulates his ideas about the future of Geographic Information Systems evokes curiosity and awareness for those fortunate enough to hear him speak. Also, one cannot deny his passion for his work or his sincere interest in the world and its environment. I would like to thank Mr. Jack Dangermond for the wonderful experience of meeting him and the excitement he brought to the SWT Geography.



Texas Watch News

Alex Marsh

At the end of its second year at SWT, Texas Watch is still going strong. Coming up at Aquarena Springs on March 30 and 31 is our annual Meeting of the Monitors. The purpose of this event is to bring together volunteer monitors from across the state and to give them a chance to meet, as well as to attend workshops that support monitoring and advanced training activities. During the past year, more than 2500 monitoring events have taken place and over 250 new monitors have joined the Texas Watch team. We are excited to see so many people volunteering their time to make a positive contribution toward cleaner water and environmental protection!

This year's Meeting of the Monitors includes field trips to the Bamberger Ranch, a trip to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Hatchery, a trip to learn about bio-monitoring and habitat assessment, and a canoe trip down the San Marcos River. Speakers include J. David Bamberger (from Bamberger Ranch) and Jack Nelson from the Lavaca-Navidad River Authority. A panel discussion will take place on the 31st in an effort to foster a dialogue between natural resource protection authorities, policy makers, scientists, and citizens. Panelists will include Suzanne Zarling (LCRA), Sparky Anderson (Clean Water Action), Buster Brown (senator), and Dianne Wassenich (President of the San Marcos River Foundation).

see *Texas Watch*, pg. 7



Warm Welcome: Sandra Foglia

Carley Pilgrim



The Department of Geography at Southwest Texas University would like to excitedly welcome Sandra Foglia in the position of Administrative Assistant II. Sandra comes to us bearing excellent skills, a willing dedication, and a laid-back disposition, three traits this department will truly appreciate. Sandra and her husband David have three boys, Andrew 13, Luke 9, and Francis 4, and currently reside in Fischer, Texas. Although Sandra has plenty of experience in office management, she also has been a registered massage therapist for the past eleven years and received her certification as a paralegal at the University of Texas in 1998. Since then, Sandra has been a part-time student at Southwest Texas in pursuit of her bachelors degree, a full-time Mom, and partner in her husband's antique business in Austin, which specializes in mission style arts and crafts. For those of us that believe that arts and crafts begin and end in

Fredericksburg, Sandra and David deal mostly in beautiful, turn of the century (that's 20th century) mission style antiques, art, and furniture, in other words, the real thing. During our interview, Sandra emphasized her excitement to join our geographical family. She says, "I am here because I want to be here", and "feels honored to have been chosen by the most impressive department on campus".

Department News

GTU Has Busy Year

Richard A. Earl



The SWT Chapter of the International Geography Honor Society, Gamma Theta Upsilon, had a busy fall 2000 semester. Under president Matt Reeb, the chapter conducted a full slate of activities including the induction of eight new members and a successful banquet at the Salt Lick. Under the leadership of chapter treasurer Nancy Middlebrook, GTU initiated a geography tutorial program for 4th grade students at DeZavala Elementary School in San Marcos. For the spring semester, the club plans a field trip to Enchanted Rock as well as an induction BBQ and social at Canyon Lake. GTU alumni are welcome to participate in these activities and may obtain specific information from the GTU Web page accessible through the department homepage www.geo.swt.edu. GTU alumni who have not received their certificate may either pick it up at the GTU booth at the Alumni Reunion and Student Celebration on April 21 or contact me (RE02@SWT.EDU). Provide me a mailing address, and I will be happy to send you your certificate. In addition, GTU members who want to continue to receive the Geographical Bulletin may do so by contacting me and joining the Omega Omega GTU alumni chapter for \$10.00/year, \$17.00/2 years, or \$24.00/3 years.

Texas Watch continued

Coming up on April 18, Texas Watch will celebrate Earth Day by coordinating a mass monitoring event with volunteers throughout the state and holding a variety of educational workshops in different watersheds.

We want everyone to know that the Meeting of the Monitors is open to the public as well as the Earth Day events. We would like to encourage anyone interested (particularly students) to look at our Web site: www.texaswatch.geo.swt.edu. Through the Web site you may select the applicable fee and register for the Meeting of the Monitors or learn more about volunteering opportunities. Texas Watch provides an excellent opportunity to work proactively to improve our shared water resources.

CENTER FOR NATURE AND HERITAGE TOURISM

Jim Kimmel, Director

The Center continues to emphasize interpretation, which is the learning aspect of nature and heritage tourism. As we travel across the Southwest and talk with individuals in the private sector and in tourism organizations, it is increasingly clear that interpretation is left out of their plans, although tourism professionals consider it to be the core of the tourism attraction or activity. We are focusing on both traditional guided and self-guided interpretation, as well as exciting high tech possibilities.

We are working toward certification through the National Association for Interpretation to allow us to provide training for student certification as Interpretive Guides. This training will be part of our new course in Interpretive Environmental Geography that is now going through the approval process.

The Center is producing several publications to demonstrate how geography can provide useful themes for interpretation. Our booklet titled "Nature, People, and the Landscape of Bandera County" helps visitors learn how to "read" the landscape of part of the Texas Hill Country. In conjunction with the Departments of Anthropology and History at SWT, we are working on an interpretive book on the San Marcos River, funded by a grant from the Summerlee Foundation. We are also working on a booklet titled "The Kyle of Katherine Ann Porter" to supplement the interpretive value of the restored Porter House in Kyle.

We continue to cooperate with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the Texas Department of Agriculture in their efforts to assist nature tourism development in the state. SWT is also now a partner in the Desert Southwest Cooperative Ecosystem Study Unit, along with the University of Arizona, New Mexico State University, the University of California at Riverside, Washington University, the Sonoran Institute, and the Arizona Sonoran Desert Museum. This association will provide opportunities for research on federal lands administered by the National Park Service, the US Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and several other agencies.

Yongxia Skadberg successfully defended her dissertation proposal, titled "Research on Optimal Experience of Visitors to a Virtual Tour Web site for Nature Tourism," and Ron Stephenson completed his comprehensive exams. He and Andy Skadberg are both developing exciting dissertation proposals in conjunction with their work in the center.

SWT GEOGRAPHERS SHINE AT SWAAG AND AAG

Fred M. Shelley

More than 30 SWT geography faculty, staff, and alumni braved driving rains to attend the annual meeting of the Southwestern Division of the Association of American Geographers (SWAAG) on the campus of Texas A&M University in College Station, November 2-4, 2000.

For the third consecutive year, an SWT graduate student or alumnus took first place in the annual SWAAG student paper competition. Ph.D. candidate Ron Hagelman was awarded first place for his paper, "Three Feet High and Rising: Urban Geography and the Floodplain." Other SWT presenters included graduate students Stephanie Garcia, Mia Sealey, and Andy Skadberg; faculty members Denise Blanchard-Boehm, Vijay Boken, David Butler, Fred Day, Rich Dixon, Rich Earl, Dennis Fitzsimons, Jim Kimmel, George Malanson and John Tiefenbacher, and alumni Teresa Howard and Rebecca Sheehan.

In late February, nearly 20 graduate students, more than a dozen faculty, and several alumni traveled to New York for the 97th annual meeting of the Association of American Geographers (AAG). Fifteen current students—Lydia Bean, Jeff Cook, Stephanie Garcia, Melissa Gray, Lene Griego, Ron Hagelman, Jeff Lash, Miranda Lewitsky, William Pugatch, David Rutherford, Ginger Schmid, Michelle Shuey, Ron Stephenson, and Forrest Wilkerson—gave paper and poster presentations at the New York meeting. Lene Griego, an undergraduate major, is the first winner of the Eyton Travel Scholarship and used this scholarship to give a paper on inter-basin water transfers and their effects on exotic species. SWT's outstanding doctoral, master's, and undergraduate students constituted the largest number of student presenters of any geography department outside the Northeast!

Wonderfully FREE!! Alumni Reunion and Student Celebration continued...

Registration pg. 16



After the formal program, the venue will shift to the Evans Liberal Awards Building for workshops, lab demonstrations, and tours. Planned activities will include the annual career planning and job placement workshop, a discussion on the future of geography as a discipline,

and tours of the department and its newest laboratory facilities and equipment. Following these activities, we will adjourn to the



Aquarena Springs for the annual barbecue.

The annual Alumni Reunion and Student Celebration is aptly named, for it provides members of the SWT Geography family with an opportunity

to celebrate who we are, what we have done, and where we are going. For current students, this is a unique opportunity to network with many alumni who work in the private and public sectors across Texas and elsewhere around the country. Lunch and dinner are included with the registration.

Thanks to the generosity of the department and our several sponsors in the community, students registering in advance will be given FREE registration in exchange for a can of food to be donated to the San Marcos charities. Students must register by Tuesday, April 17 in order to take advantage of this free



registration. Registration for nonstudents will be \$10, with children under 12 free.

We hope that you and your loved ones will attend and celebrate the outstanding achievements of the department and its excellent students, staff, and faculty!



Last Call for Business Cards!!!!

This is your last chance to include your business card in "Careers/Jobs in Geography," the business card directory of recent SWT Geography graduates. Published by the Grosvenor Center, the Department of Geography uses this booklet to show potential, current, and former students what kinds of jobs people who have graduated with undergraduate and graduate degrees in Geography are holding. Geography alumni use this publication as a way to stay in touch with fellow alumni. SWT also uses the document as a recruiting tool for the Graduate College. Ron Abler, Executive Director of the Association of American Geographers, has asked to include this business card directory on the AAG Web site.

Even if you have sent us your business card in recent years, we are starting over fresh and are including everyone's most recent business card. Please send two copies of your business card to:

Grosvenor Center for Geographic Education
Department of Geography
Southwest Texas State University
601 University Drive
San Marcos, TX 78666

If you have any questions, please contact Judy Behrens at 512-245-1823 or jb42@swt.edu

Alumni Bits

Compiled by Fred M. Shelley

Terry Booth (MAG, 2000) entered the Ph.D. program in Environmental Dynamics at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville in Spring 2001.

John Bradford (B.A., 1998) is working for David Weekley Homes in Austin, Texas as an estimator. Previously, he did contract and design work for landscape architects and civil engineers, and worked as an estimator for Fairfield Development, an apartment developer based out of Dallas.

Shannon Breslin (MAG, 1998) left her post as Environmental Review Coordinator at Texas Parks and Wildlife, where she had been employed for more than seven years, to become a Senior Environmental Coordinator at the Lower Colorado River Authority in 1999. She writes, "I work in the Community Services line of business and have a mixture of responsibilities. Depending on the week, I assist with infrastructure planning (water, wastewater, transmission, and natural gas lines), park (re)development, grant writing, and education/outreach opportunities. The focus of my work continues to be protection of sensitive natural resources in concert with responsible community development."

Julie Brown (MAG, 1998) left USGS in Austin and is now working for USAA Insurance in San Antonio.

B. J. Carpenter (MAG, 1999) is with the Watershed Protection Department, City of Austin.

Kirk D. Clennan (B.A., 1988) is Executive Director of Cedar Park Development Corporations in Cedar Park.

Deborah Alsup Cortez (B.A., 1992, MAG, 2000) is working for the Texas General Land Office in Resource Management in the Coastal Projects Division.

see *Alumni Bits*, pg. 11



7th Annual Geography Alumni Reunion and Student Celebration Saturday, April 21, 2001- Tentative Program

9:00 a.m. Registration	Centennial Hall
9:30 a.m. Formal Program I	Centennial Hall
9:30 a.m. Welcome	
9:35 a.m. Presentation of Scholarships	
10:30 a.m. Break	
10:45 a.m. State of the Department Address	
11:30 a.m. Lunch	Centennial Hall
12:30 p.m. Formal Program II	Centennial Hall
12:30 p.m. Entertainment Segment	
12:45 p.m. Awards Ceremony:	
Student Organization Awards	
Departmental Student Awards	
Outstanding Department Service Awards	
Outstanding Staff Service Awards	
Outstanding Leadership Awards	
Past Distinguished Alumni Recognition	
Outstanding Alumni Awards	
Recognition and Presentation to Sent Visser	
2:30 p.m. Workshops, Demonstrations & Tours I	Evans Liberal Arts
Department Tour	
Lab Demonstrations	
Job Networking Workshop I	
NAEP Environmental Workshop	
Glacier Project Discussion	
Graduate Forum Panel Discussion:	
"Have you thought about Graduate School?"	
Cindy Gratz: GIS Dance Presentation	
3:40 p.m. Workshops, Demonstrations & Tours II	Evans Liberal Arts
Department Tour	
Lab Demonstrations	
Job Networking Workshop II	
SWIG Panel Discussion	
Closed Landfill Project Workshop	
Cindy Gratz: GIS Dance Presentation & Hawaiian Dancers	
5:00 p.m. BBQ Social	Pecan Grove Picnic Area Aquarena Center
Kegs Tapped at 5:00	
Food Served: 5:30 - 7:30	
Glass -bottom Boat Excursions	
"World Music & Dancing"	
Walking Tours of Aquarena Center at Old Texana Village,	
Endangered Species Exhibit,	
San Marcos High School Jazz Band	
"Earth-Day" Kid's Games, SWT Salsa Band	



New Ph.D. and Master Assistants For 2000-2001



Lydia Bean, BA 1998, Indiana University; MAG 1999, SWT; Mitte Scholar
 Research Interests: U.S. Mexico border, risk and vulnerability, political borders and health impacts
 Hobbies: Art galleries, hiking, gardening, volunteer to take care of animals, cooking, and travel



Kristine Egan, BA 1997, UT at San Antonio, MAG 2000; SWT, Mitte Scholar
 Research Interests: GIScience, Water Resources
 Hobbies: Reading, biking, rock climbing, camping, and travel



Ellen Foster, BS 1993, Texas Tech University; MA 1994, Trinity University
 Research Interests: Profiling Geography majors and their characteristics in Geographic Education



Jonathan Herbert, BA 1992, Geography University of Sheffield; MS 2000, University of East Anglia Norwich, England
 Research Interests: Climate change, El Nino because of global warming, global warming and extreme weather
 Hobbies: Soccer, movies, and reading



Paul Nagel, BA 1991, University of Minnesota; MA 1997, University of Guam
 Research Interests: Kindergarden through 5th grade in geographic education
 Hobbies: Sports especially Baseball--Round Rock Express, Chicago Cubs--Green Bay Packers, and movie buff



Lynn Resler, BA University of Minnesota; MA University of Texas
 Research Interests: Preservation of fragile ecotones
 Hobbies: Photography, sciences, and information technology



David Rutherford, BA 1984, UCLA; MA 2000, California State University, Fullerton
 Research Interests: Teaching and learning of geography in higher education
 Hobbies: Surfing, mountain biking, and triathlons



Cathy Springer, BS 1998 Geography SWT; MA 2000, SWT
 Research Interests: Geographic education (university level), computer-aided instruction, hazards, and risk communication
 Hobbies: Shopping, making crafts/decorations, bike riding, and playing with our cat (Patches)



Brian Cooper BS Biological Sciences,
 Clemson University
 Research Interests: Regional Geography, Environmental
 Geography



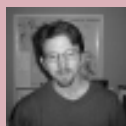
David Jordan BS Geological Sciences,
 University of Texas
 Research Interests: Cartography, GIS



Ionara De Lima BS Geography,
 Federal University as Ceara State (Brazil)
 Research Interests: GIS, Cartography



Miranda Lewitsky BA Elementary Education/
 Geography, UNC-Chapel Hill
 Research Interests: Biogeography, Sense of Place



Brian Dopp BS Geography, SWT
 Research Interests: Disaster management,
 Rural Community Response Problems to Disasters



Julie Livingston BS General Geography, SWT
 Research Interests: Interpretive Writing



Jessica Fox BS Physical and Applied Geography, SWT
 Research Interests: Climatology



Emily Manderson BA Sociology,
 Skidmore College
 Research Interests: Environmental Geography



Melissa Gray BA Geography,
 University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire
 Research Interests: General Geography,
 Population Geography



Alex Marsh BA U.S. Social History,
 Antioch College (OH)
 Research Interest: Natural Resource and
 Community Planning

see New Masters, pg. 12

Alumni Bits continued from pg. 8

Craig Eissler (B.A., 1985) is an independent GIS contractor and education consultant. Craig is currently consulting with the SWT Geography on special initiatives. Previously, he spent over eight years in the Cartography/GIS field. Four of those years were in Silicon Valley working for a GIS software developer, Strategic Mapping (Atlas GIS), as a sales and marketing professional. He also worked for several other high tech start-up companies, both in California and on his return to Austin. His most recent work before starting his own business was with a community-based organization involved in workforce development.

Jaime Fernandez (MAG, 1991) is an Environmental Justice Specialist with the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission in Austin.

Chad Hall (MAG, 1998) is Regional Sales Manager for Trimble. He represents GIS and mapping products in Texas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico. His company develops innovative Global Positioning System (GPS) technology-based products for a wide range of applications.

Josephine Jarrell (MAG, 1999) is Project Manager for the Environmental Affairs Division, Texas Department of Transportation.

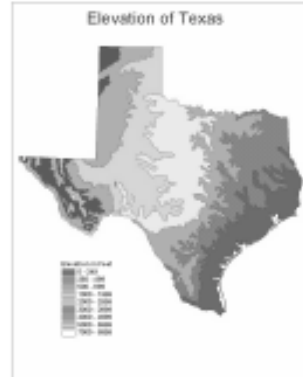
Chris Langston (B.S., 1995) earned a master's degree from the University of Texas at San Antonio in 1999 and is working as a transportation modeler with the Alamo Area Council of Governments.

Michael Lindner (MAG, 1999) and his band, El Michael and the Moving Blues, released its first CD entitled "One Good Vibe." Yomamacom.com Records released the CD. Another SWT Geography alumnus, Bob Stafford (B.S., 2000), is a member of the band.

Mike Napier (B.A., 1990) works as a GIS analyst for the Pacific Disaster Center in Kihei, Hawaii. He enjoys surfing, fishing, hiking, and camping and has fond memories of great professors and the Texas coast.

see Alumni Bits, pg. 13

Across the U.S.



Texas Atlas Project Soars

Lawrence Estaville

SWT Geography's Texas Atlas Project is a multi-product, multi-year project focused on conceptualizing and producing a variety of atlases and maps to fill important gaps in educating the citizens of Texas. Scheduled for completion this semester, the first atlas, a School Atlas of Texas, has contractual negotiations ongoing with a prospective publisher. The atlas is expected to be brought to market by July 2001. Keep an eye on the department's Web site for purchasing details and check out examples of maps in the atlas.

Karin Ascot: Environmental Activist

Emily Manderson

As a student in the Master of Applied Geography program with a major in Resource and Environmental Studies, Karin Ascot was among the founders of the Graduate Student Forum and a leader among the students before she graduated in 1997. This was not the last trend she was to set. With honey red curly hair reminiscent of Botticelli's painting the Birth of Venus, Karin Ascot is working on issues perhaps as grand as the birth of beauty.

For three years, Karin Ascot has been the conservation chair for the Austin Regional Group of the Sierra Club. She has been an advocate for various changes in perceptions of how societies create their environments. Issues such as urban sprawl and transportation are her main points of focus. Her biggest challenge is that the solutions for transportation are counterintuitive. According to Ascot, the topic of transportation is often "fraught with misunderstanding and myth. Adding lanes to a congested highway does not help the problem." The problem according to Ascot is a lack of understanding the system as a whole. One widened road does not make changing patterns. Ascot tries to convince people of the fact that land use and transportation are inseparable topics. This challenge is immense because it takes a great deal of explanation; one cannot summarize the causes of urban sprawl in a quick sound bite.

Ascot attributes the invaluable skill of seeing things with a holistic perspective to her study of geography. For example, in her studies she attained the proper vocabulary with which to define huge phenomena such as, "urban sprawl that exists as low-density auto dependent environments." Another important influence has been theories of New Urbanism, which she studied with Fred Day. These influences helped build a solid foundation that she uses to convince people that compact, mixed, pedestrian-friendly cities are superior living environments for both people and the land.

As geographers we can stand proud knowing that people such as Karin Ascot are using their educational backgrounds to advocate for issues such as light rail, fewer roads in national forests, diminishing urban sprawl, pipeline safety, and many other important matters. A goddess in truth.

U.S. Geological Survey Continues Funding of Alpine Treeline Study

Dr. David Butler

The U.S. Geological Survey's Biological Resources Division has continued its funding of the work of David Butler and George Malanson in Glacier National Park, Montana. The project, in collaboration with research scholars in the Park and at several other major U.S. universities, is examining the alpine treeline ecotone to determine if an upward advance of trees into the adjacent alpine tundra is occurring. Such an upward movement would likely be attributable to climatic change, but in a complex interaction with a variety of geomorphic and biogeographic processes occurring at the treeline. During the summer of 2000, Butler and Malanson, along with doctoral students Forrest Wilkerson and Ginger Schmid, conducted fieldwork for the second season. Malanson is gathering data on soil depth and site conditions to enhance the accuracy of simulation models he conducts to determine the likely location of future treeline movements. Butler is characterizing site soil and landform conditions, through installation and monitoring of eolian sediment traps, and measurements of surface landform morphometry.

see U.S.G.S. Alpine Study, pg. 14

Undergraduate continued

As an alumnus of our program, you are in a great position to help spread the word that geography offers exciting and lucrative career opportunities for everyone regardless of gender or ethnicity.

We are also graduating our majors in a timely manner. Annual degree production, SWT's way of reporting the number of students who graduate in a given year, has increased considerably from 157 in 1995 to 179 in 2000, with about 30 percent of our majors graduating in a given year. The number of females graduating with Geography degrees over the five year period went from 49 in 1995 to 66 in 2000. Males increased from 108 to 113 for the same period. The increase in degrees awarded in Geography is especially significant since nationally both enrollments and degrees awarded in Geography have been declining since the mid-1990s.

Our undergraduate majors are also getting good jobs. A recent survey showed that 98.6 percent of geography alumni responding were employed full-time. The department receives and posts a large number of requests for interns and full-time employees with geography backgrounds and skills. These represent a growing number of firms and agencies that specifically target our majors and are in addition to the mainstream employment opportunities. The growing demand is the result of advances in technology and an expanding understanding in both private and public sectors of how geographically educated employees can make substantial and valuable contributions to planning and problem solving. Our undergraduates are also increasingly successful in obtaining competitive graduate study opportunities at prestigious universities.

Another benefit is that our majors do not have to move great distances to get employment upon graduation. Departmental components of alumni surveys for 1999 and 2000 confirm that about half of our graduates reside in the Austin-San Antonio Corridor after graduating, suggesting that they are finding jobs in their fields in the local area. The Houston and DFW metropolitan areas are next as employment and residential destinations for our graduates. Interestingly, these rates are similar to the geographic origins of our majors that suggests that many are successful in returning to their home areas for employment after graduation.

This summary should convince you of two things. First, the solid foundation upon which our alumni received their geography training is better than ever; and, second, we are constantly working to improve the undergraduate experience in the department of Geography. The faculty are more numerous and widely trained, the facilities are constantly expanding and being upgraded, and our majors are better prepared and better performing than ever before. The more things change, the more they stay the same, but it's "still Geography after all these years!"

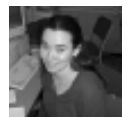


New Master Assistants continued

William Pugatch BA Music, California State University Fullerton
Research Interests: GIS, Geomusicology



Amanda Ross BA Geography, University of Texas
Research Interests: Preservation of Public lands, Outdoor Education



Jamie Smelser BA Anthropology/Geography, University of Texas
Research Interests: Coastal area management, Bay/Estuary Health



Emariana Taylor BA Anthropology, University of Houston
Research Interests: Computer Cartography, GIS



Brian Teinert BA Geography, University of Texas
Research Interests: Water Resources and community planning



Jeff Wilson BS Engineering, Texas A&M University
Research Interests: Stratospheric Ozone Depletion

Graduate continued

Our Ph.D. students have done a remarkable job in classroom teaching. Ron Hagelman, Forrest Wilkerson, Ginger Schmid, Lydia Bean, Michelle Shuey and others have brought cutting-edge research, enthusiasm, warmth, and caring into the classes and laboratories, and they have earned excellent teaching evaluations from their students.

We have made considerable progress at promoting gender, ethnic, and cultural diversity. More than half of our graduate students are women—up from 26% eight years ago. We are supporting an increasing number of international and ethnic minority students as well. Our international students have come from such diverse countries as China, India, Brazil, Canada, Spain, Mexico, Turkey, Colombia, Germany, the United Kingdom and many other parts of the world. Their international perspectives have given all of us new insights into the importance of the geographic perspective worldwide. How have we done it? What is the secret of our success? I can answer these questions in three phrases—excellent staff, excellent faculty, and excellent students. Our office staff, and notably Joan Pasquali, who has done a remarkable job assisting me in administering the graduate programs, is outstanding. Our faculty are highly committed to high-quality, rigorous, thought-provoking graduate teaching inside and outside the classroom. Most important, of course, is the quality of students themselves. Our students are committed, hard-working professionals and they are dedicated to using their graduate experience to launch or further their careers. They deserve and demand excellence, and we in the department are doing our best to provide it.

Let me close by congratulating my colleague and good friend, Sent Visser, upon his retirement from the University after many years of outstanding service. Many graduate alumni will recall Sent's hard work, thoughtfulness, and commitment to excellence during his years as Graduate Program Coordinator, and as a mentor in many theses and directed research projects. Sent played an important and critical role in developing national recognition for our graduate programs. Please join me on April 21 at the 7th Annual Alumni Reunion and Student Celebration, not only to wish Sent many happy and productive years of retirement, but also to celebrate our achievements and look forward to even greater accomplishments in the future.



Alumni Bits continued from pg. 11

Kerry Niemann (B.S., 1996) has worked for the Texas Natural Resource and Conservation Commission for four years. He worked for two years in the On-Site Sewage Facility Program (OSSF) and became a member of the Region IV Emergency Spill Response Team. He then transferred into the Water Quality Program and was recognized as 1999 Employee of the Year. After two years of investigating wastewater treatment plants, sand and gravel mining facilities, and confined animal feedlot operations in the Water Quality Program, he became Water Program Liaison for the Field Operations Division. Since then, he has been Water Program Liaison for the OSSF Program, Edwards Aquifer Protection Program (EAPP), and Non-Point Source Pollution Programs. He writes, "I am the proud father of a two year old daughter and husband of my beautiful wife who works for the TNRCC as well in the Office of Environmental Policy, Analysis, and Assessment. To anyone interested in working for a regulatory agency I would emphasize a minor in science."

Parke Patterson (B.A., 1985) is a consultant in land development services, urban planning, and land development financing in Sugar Land, Texas.

Richard Reedy (B.S., 1995) works as a GIS technician with the City of Round Rock Public Works Department.

Ken Schmidt (B.A., 1983) is coordinator of Geographic Information Systems for the Department of Planning and Permitting for the city of Honolulu, Hawaii.

Chad Simpson (B.S., 2000) has accepted a position with ESRI in Redlands, California.

Jennifer Taylor (B.A., 2000) works with annuities in the intellectual property firm of Howery, Simon, Arnold & White in Houston

Center for Texas-Mexico Applied Research

David Stea, Director

The SWT Center for Texas-Mexico Applied Research (CeTMAR), took on several new projects during academic year 2000. With David Stea as Director and John Tiefenbacher as Associate Director, CeTMAR is sponsoring contracts for borderlands closed landfill inventories in two Texas counties, and several research projects in environmental perception. CeTMAR also sponsored the year 2000 SWT summer field course on Environmental and Cultural Geography of the Bajio region of Mexico and is co-sponsoring, together with the Grosvenor Center for Geographic Education, a geography field course in Northern Mexico in conjunction with the International Conference in Geographic Education to be held at SWT in May 2001.

CeTMAR has established ties with the state universities of Tamaulipas and Guanajuato, with governmental entities in the State of Guanajuato, and with the Institute of Geography at the National University of Mexico. Between February and November 2000, CeTMAR members wrote and submitted for funding a number of proposals for academic and contract research on subjects ranging from our two nations' reciprocal environmental and cultural perception through borderlands tourism inventories.

Geography in the Workplace: Environmental Outreach on the U.S. – Mexico Border

Rebekah Hoffacker (MAG, 1994)

I have been working for the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in Region 9 (California, Arizona, Nevada, Hawaii, and the Pacific Islands) for the past three years. My title is U.S.-Mexico Border Outreach Specialist. I focus on community outreach for the EPA's US-Mexico border program, called Border XXI.

Border XXI is a unique program that brings together U.S. and Mexican entities responsible for the border environment to work together cooperatively toward sustainable development through protection of human health and the environment and good management of natural resources in both countries. This program emphasizes three strategies in advancing the goal of sustainable development: 1) ensure public involvement in the development and implementation of the program, 2) build capacity and decentralize environmental management in order to give more authority to local and state governments and environmental managers in the implementation of the program and 3) ensure inter-agency cooperation to maximize available resources. The community outreach that I do involves educating local and tribal governments, nonprofit organizations (health and environmental), academia, and the general public about the program, and encourage their input in the decisions that are made by EPA and its Mexican counterpart, SEMARNAP. I also manage grants and work with communities on environmental health issues such as asthma and lead and pesticide exposure.

One of my most recent accomplishments has been a completion of a documentary film entitled "Border Visions," a bilingual educational tool for the general public on the issues we are working on binationally at a local level with a goal of encouraging increased public participation. I have recently sent a copy of this film to my graduate advisor, Dr. Fred Day, so if you are interested in seeing it, pick up the copy from him. This film is used at universities, in local governments, and has been sent to Presidents Bush and Fox to educate them on the issues. As well, a couple of Texas public television stations have broadcasted the film. The national PBS network has expressed interest in broadcasting it as well. To learn more about this program, we have a Web site: www.epa.gov/usmexicoborder

Before working at EPA, I worked for TNRCC as a U.S.-Mexico border hazardous waste inspector. I provided training seminars for the Mexican government on U.S. regulations regarding the import and export of hazardous waste, did inspections in maquiladora warehouses and on truck crossing over from Mexico, and assisted the Mexican government in inspection procedures. Previously, I had worked for TNRCC as an enforcement coordinator. In this capacity, I wrote agreed orders, and negotiated with companies that had air quality violations across the state.

Around the World...

Peace Corps Volunteer, Honduras 1999-2001

Nora Pena

As I sit here thinking about what I am going to write for the department of Geography newsletter about my exciting first year in the Peace Corps in Honduras, I find myself fascinated by the jackass cutting my lawn. By jackass, I really do mean donkey. It is my one-year anniversary in Honduras and all I can think about is the beach and if the burros will hopefully cut a path to my scary latrine (not looking good). I graduated from SWT Geography in 1998. I joined the Peace Corps in December 1999 and for more than a year have been serving in Honduras. My brain is mush, my body is Jell-O, and physically all I have to show for it is this permanent farmer tan. Personally, I have learned so much and have finally caught up to my real age of 24.

First, the Peace Corps is not for everyone, and not everyone is for the Peace Corps. I joined the Peace Corps to make a difference, get away, learn from myself, buy some time before I have to face the reality of student loans, and most of all put my degree to use in another country. So far, I have achieved each one of these personal goals. However, the Peace Corps had a different agenda for me over the 27 months I would serve. There are three goals that define the Peace Corps mission: to help the peoples of interested countries and areas in meeting their needs for trained men and women; to help promote a better understanding of American people on the part of the peoples served; to help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of the American peoples. As a Natural Resource Volunteer, I have certain project plans that Peace Corps, as a whole, wants to achieve such as, reforestation of micro-watersheds, environmental education, and protection of areas management. I work with reforestation and environmental education at a local school.

Let me tell you about my experience in the Peace Corps in Honduras. I live in a community of 300 homes, multiply by 5 and that gives you the current population of Las Animas, also known as Purgatory. How perfect for me since people always say I am a free spirit. Beautiful pine forest, children, animal poop, and churro bags (snacks that children eat and litter after they are done stuffing their faces) surround me. When it is hot, it is so hot and miserable that no one wants to do much but stay under the shade lying in a hammock. December through May is the dry season. Come March we get nighttime illuminations and morning fog due to man-set forest fires that one can see from miles away. June through November is the wet season, when it rains and rains.

The Peace Corps training program slowly eases us into our minimal living conditions and isolated environments. I think the hardest part was talking to strangers and striking up conversation with them, feeling comfortable entering their homes, and acting like a normal person in another language, culture, and environment. I think the impact of experiencing it all at once caught me off guard; new community, food, no friends and exposure to living without electricity and normal material goods we Americans take for granted. Now, I have been here for a year and I think I have the hang of things. Speaking in front of people in Spanish could not be easier even if I fumbled all over my words. They seem to understand me and I get them to smile at the same time.

I currently live in a home that is smaller than Dr. Estaville's office. I share this place with Rudy the rat, Mortimer the mouse, and Ralph the roach with occasional visits from their drunken cousins that swing by looking for midnight munchies. Food is a problem. Rice and beans everyday is not something I was expecting to eat for two years. In order to change this, I have to travel every week to the closest city of Danli, which is two hours by bus. Just think, in two hours you can travel from Austin, have lunch in San Marcos and be in San Antonio in time for soaps. I guess your wondering why I would torture myself by going every week on a two-hour bus ride, but there is no electricity (yet) in Las Animas nor a phone, computer, or even a telegraph.

This is only the tip of the iceberg on describing my Peace Corps experience, and every volunteer's experience is different. I have good times and bad times. Frustrations lie on a more emotional level that have absolutely nothing to do with Honduras but the fact that I am in a foreign country makes the impact of loneliness and challenges ten times worse. Things I deal with everyday such as: lack of motivation, weight gain, lack of physical exercise, limited diet and nutrition, lack of emotional support, trying to understand my community, and the Peace Corps relationship with me make me ask the question every volunteer at one point or another ask him or herself, "What am I doing here?" I ask myself that question several times a month. In America, one can see their success in acquired materials, goals and promotions, and money. However, in the Peace Corps, success is hard to judge. I shall keep trying. See you in late November when this dream is over.

Over Seas Study: Geography of Europe Expanded to Include Paris

Richard Earl



Starting in 1997, SWT Geography introduced a biannual Geography of Europe field study course during the summer. Focusing on two weeks of study at Franklin College in the

beautiful Lake District resort city of Lugano, Switzerland, the initial trips included additional study and travel in Rome, Pisa, Florence, Venice, Milan, and St. Moritz. The 1997 trip was lead by "Doc" Augustin and Jim Kimmel. Jim Kimmel and Richard Earl led the 1999 trip. For 2001, the expanded trip, with Fred Day and Richard Earl as leaders, includes Eurail travel to Zurich, Switzerland and then concluding with three nights in Paris. In addition, the class will stay a full day studying alpine geography in Valle Vezasca, site of the opening scenes of the James Bond feature Goldeneye, and will spend an evening in Belanzona, the fortress town at the southern entrance to St. Gotthard Pass over the Alps. The trip will depart from Houston on July 7 and return on July 31. The next trip is scheduled for the summer of 2003 with Fred Day as trip leader. Alumni who want to earn 6-cr hrs. toward a Masters of Applied Geography degree are encouraged to participate. Contact Fred Day (FD02@SWT.EDU) if you would like to receive additional information on the summer 2003 excursion.

U.S.G.S. Alpine Study continued

Doctoral students Wilkerson and Schmid are both assisting in the fieldwork and conducting their doctoral research in the area. During the coming summer 2001, Dr. Butler and Dr. Malanson will gather additional field data on wind-blown sediment, soil characteristics in the alpine tundra where tree invasion is most likely to occur; and the role of animals in disturbing soils through digging activities at treeline. New doctoral student Lynn Resler will join the field team and assist in data acquisition. Results of the past years' activities are currently the subject of several papers in development. During August and October, Drs. Malanson and Butler, respectively, presented results from the past field seasons at international conferences in Banff, Alberta, and Binghamton, New York. Both papers are being published in the refereed conference proceedings.

MODERNIZATION, THE ENVIRONMENT AND WOMEN IN MOROCCO

Venecia Kelly (B.A., 1997)

I taught English as a foreign language at the American Center in Rabat, Morocco. In the Ville Nouvelle (new city), the streets are lined with European cafes and relatively modern buildings. The contrast between old and new is quite apparent here. In the midst of modernization, there exists Moroccan tradition, from the traditional dress, the djellaba, to the occasional donkey or herd of sheep in the streets.

I teach all ages of students, from nine-year-olds to adults. Most Moroccans speak two or three languages so for most, English is their fourth or fifth language. Since the French occupation, French has been the official language in business and government which makes it, in addition to Arabic, compulsory in schools. The Arabic spoken in Morocco is not classical, but a dialect known as Darija.

I live in an apartment, which by Moroccan standards is a luxury. I have no appliances, no fridge, no oven, no phone, not anything. I cook on burners fueled by "butagaz," which I change out monthly or so. I shower this way as well. I will say, however, that appliances are readily available but very expensive.

Unemployment in Morocco is at its highest. The government passed a law that went into effect June 1, 2000, stating that no Moroccan can have more than one job, to give others the opportunity to be employed. In addition, under a monarchy change is slow in coming, especially a monarchy whose core is Islam. The one hope is that the new king is young, and perhaps he will ensure that Moroccans are accommodated and that the economy grows with time.

Because Morocco has so many problems of its own, there is little focus on Middle East politics. Discussions about the Middle East tend to be about Islam, the difference in Arabic dialects, and modernization. Moroccans are proud of their strides in technology and quality of life for women as compared to the Middle East. They believe that Moroccans give women a fair shot and that with time Morocco will eventually become a developed country. Although many students believe that the U.S. government is greedy, smothering and overpowering, their opinion of Americans is different from neighboring Islamic nations. They seem to like Americans.

Environmentally, Morocco has much work to do. Air pollution is heavy because there are no emission regulations. There is a dumpster on every block about half the size of normal dumpster in the States, which makes for overflowing trash because the population for every block is twice that in the States. Recycling is not an issue here. People are more concerned with finding work rather than saving the Earth.

The streets of Rabat are lined with cafes; cafes full of men. Where are the women? Women in Morocco still need permission from either their fathers or husbands to engage in social activity. Women are not out and about socializing and sitting in cafes; they are at school or at home or at work. The women are sometimes angry about certain "rules" that apply to only them, but, in the end, what the Koran says is truth. Things are being done to change the way women are perceived and treated, shwia buh shwia (little by little). Last month, there were two marches, one in Casablanca and one in Rabat. The one in Rabat was a march by women in reaction to the Islamic fundamentalist march in Casablanca. So, yes, women do care and would like to see changes made.

Mark your calendars!

***The Seventh Annual
Geography Alumni Reunion
and Student Celebration
is on ...***

April 21, 2001

NAEP continued

NAEP members gave expert testimony at the ASG meetings as to the importance of the fee and to the type of improvements that could come from it. Raising student fees is very difficult, and some senators needed convincing. In the end, ASG passed the measure, even introducing a separate bill that proposed a seven-member board that included both a geography department representative and NAEP member. One requirement of any student related fee is that the students vote on it twice: once before presentation to the administration and once after it meets the administration's conditions. NAEP members on campus administered a poll in the fall 2000. The first poll indicated tremendous support of students: 353 voted in favor of the fee, 66 voted against it.

Then, the fee passes through the President's Cabinet, the Board of Regents, and, finally, the Texas Legislature. So far, the fee has only officially passed through the President's Cabinet, but ASG stated that the fee should not have any problems with the Regents, and are focusing on the Legislature. The university attorney completed the final draft of the bill. It requires that the university charge \$1 per student per semester, not to exceed \$6 per student, per semester for environmental projects on campus. If passed by the Legislature, it will go into effect in the fall 2001. The attorney added a stipulation that any excess revenues from the fee will apply only to future environmental services.

The ESF bill was sent to our sponsor in the Texas Senate, Ken Armbrister, and to our sponsor in the Texas House of Representatives, Rick Green. Although neither has introduced their bills, they expect to do so soon. Because the Legislature has made secondary education a main goal for this session, NAEP hopes to gain strong support and set precedence for universities across Texas.

In the interim, NAEP members are continuing their work on campus recycling projects and community trash cleanups. ASG has initiated an ESF Ad-hoc Committee to smooth the transition to the real committee, and many NAEP members are part of this joint venture. Until then, keep your ears to the grapevine and keep rootin' for us!



Alumni Information Update

Mail this form to: Dr. Fred Shelley
 Department of Geography
 Southwest Texas State University
 601 University Drive
 San Marcos, TX 78666-4616

Name: _____

Degree(s): _____ Year(s) Received: _____

Home Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Place of Work: _____ Job Title: _____

Work Address: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Family, Special Interests, and Other Information: _____

Personal Reminiscences or Recommendations: _____

SWT Department of Geography's SEVENTH ANNUAL ALUMNI REUNION & STUDENT CELEBRATION REGISTRATION FORM

Saturday, April 21, 2001

Name(s): _____

Home address: _____

Day phone: _____ Evening phone: _____

E-mail: _____ Fax: _____

Number attending reunion _____ (list all names above):

Amount enclosed: _____

\$10.00 per person

(children 12 and under are free)

Method of Payment: Cash Check Credit Card

Credit Card Number: _____

Signature (required): _____

PLEASE MAIL OR FAX FORM TO:

Alumni Reunion and Student Celebration


ATTN: Judy Behrens

Department of Geography, SWT

601 University Drive, San Marcos, TX 78666

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