



GEONews

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YOUNG RECEIVES 2007 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

Geography alumnus, restaurateur Michael Young, has been named the recipient of the University's Distinguished Alumni Award for 2007. He is the first geographer to be so honored! Michael earned a bachelor's degree in Geography from the University in 1971 and opened his first restaurant, Austin's famous Mike & Charlie's, in 1974. Later he opened Austin's famed Tex-Mex restaurant, Chuy's.

Today, Mr. Young is a major stockholder and President of Chuy's Comida Deluxe, Inc., which operates several restaurants that have become Austin landmarks - Chuy's Comida Deluxe, Hula Hut, Shady Grove, and Lucy's Boatyard. Chuy's Comida Deluxe restaurants are also fixtures in Houston, Dallas, and San Antonio.

Mr. Young is also a partner in Glazing Saddles, Inc., which operates Krispy Kreme stores in Austin, San Antonio, Corpus Christi, Laredo, and Waco. Mr. Young expresses a deep commitment to helping children through a number of high-profile community service projects, including the annual Thanksgiving weekend "Children Giving to Children" parade in Austin.



*Michael R. Young, Texas State University
Distinguished Alumni Award Recipient*

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AUGUSTIN NAMED REGENT'S PROFESSOR



By a unanimous vote, the Texas State University System (TSUS) Board of Regents recognized the first recipients of the Regents' Professor Award. This award is presented in recognition of exemplary performance and contributions in teaching, research and publication, and service.

Dr. Byron D. Augustin, Texas State University-San Marcos, Department of Geography, was recognized for his 39 years of teaching experience; more than 50 teaching awards, including the Piper Professor Award; accessibility and availability to students; creative genius in photography; writing for the Journal of Geography and other scholarly journals; articles on Latin America, the Caribbean and the Middle East; work in improving Arab-American relations; and the wide-spread esteem in which he is held by students and colleagues alike.

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GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIR... *By Dr. Philip Suckling, Chair and Professor*

Welcome to the 2007-08 academic year. The Department of Geography at Texas State University-San Marcos continues to be a vibrant exciting place, as illustrated by the variety of activities highlighted in this edition of the Newsletter. Over the past year, we have graduated a large stellar group of Bachelor's students (as usual), a growing number of Master's students, and a record number of PhD students.

Several faculty members have been promoted or tenured effective at the beginning of this semester. Congratulations to Dr. Yongmei Lu and Dr. Alberto Giordano who were both promoted to Associate Professor with tenure. Dr. Osvaldo Muniz, Associate Professor, has been granted tenure. Lastly, congratulations to Dr. Richard Earl, who has been promoted to full Professor.

I am pleased to note that Dr. Ron Hagelman, who joined us last year as a temporary Lecturer, is now a tenure-track Assistant Professor. Dr. Hagelman's expertise involves environmental hazards and environmental management. We also welcome a new Senior Lecturer to the department for the geology program – Dr. Rene DeHon. A separate article about our geology program and Dr. DeHon appears elsewhere in this Newsletter.

Dr. Mark Fonstad is enjoying a developmental leave conducting research in several parts of the country during this semester and in England during most of the Spring. Dr.

Ben Zhan will also have a developmental leave during the Spring semester.

Unfortunately, the Department had to bid farewell to Dr. Le Wang, who has joined the faculty in the Department of Geography at the University of Buffalo, and to Dr. Joanna Curran, who has joined the faculty in the Department of Civil Engineering at the University of Virginia. We wish them both well in their future careers.

With the loss of Drs. Wang and Curran and with Mark and Ben on developmental leave, we have hired several part-time lecturers to teach courses as well as Dr. Don Huebner, who returns for another year as a full-time temporary Lecturer, and Dr. Jeff Wilson (PhD 2006, Canterbury University-New Zealand) who is also as a full-time temporary Lecturer. Three faculty searches are already underway to hire new tenure-track colleagues to join the department beginning Fall 2008. We seek an Assistant Professor in remote sensing, an Assistant Professor in water resources, and an Assistant or Associate Professor in geographic education.

I wish to extend my personal gratitude to the Department's wonderful staff and my faculty colleagues for their support and cooperation during the past year, which was my second here at Texas State. Our students are indeed an inspiration to us. We will continue to work together to provide a first-rate educational experience for them in this, the nation's largest and most dynamic geography program.

“OUR STUDENTS ARE INDEED AN INSPIRATION TO US. WE WILL CONTINUE TO WORK TOGETHER TO PROVIDE A FIRST-RATE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE FOR THEM IN THIS, THE NATION'S LARGEST AND MOST DYNAMIC GEOGRAPHY PROGRAM.”

GEOGRAPHY ALUMNUS RECEIVES AWARD

(Continued from page 1)

The Geography Department honored Michael with a reception on Tuesday, October 16, 2007. Subsequently, the University's events honoring his award were held on October 19 - 20, in association with Texas State's homecoming activities.

The Texas State Department of Geography recognized Mike Young's many outstanding personal and professional achievements by awarding him the Geography Distinguished Alumnus award in 1995. In 2001, he provided matching funds for 20 undergraduate scholarships in the Department of Geography. As of Spring 2007, over 100 Texas State students will have benefited from Mike's generosity. In addition to his long history of support for the Department of Geography, Mr. Young also currently serves as an inaugural member of the College of Liberal Arts Development Advisory Board, which was established in March 2006 to assist with development efforts of the College.

THIRTY-TWO STUDENTS CONTINUE ON-GOING TRADITION

By Dr. Fred Day, Professor

During June 2007, the Department of Geography continued an on-going tradition since 1997: our month-long field study program in Italy, Switzerland and France. The bi-annual six credit-hour program included more than a week in several great cities of Italy (Rome, Milan, Pisa, Florence and Venice), two weeks at Franklin College in Lugano, Switzerland, and a week split between the French Riviera and Paris. This summer Fred and Anu Day, and Alberto Giordano and Marta Mastroianni lead a group of 28 undergraduate and four graduate students from Geography, Mass Communications and other departments.

This program afforded great opportunities to both faculty and students. The extended travel encouraged students to observe...history, differing landscapes, the diversity of culture... During the two weeks in Lugano, the group studied the Regional Geography of Europe in formal morning classes and undertook local field trips in the afternoons. Franklin College, a small international college with a picturesque hillside site, provided excel-

lent residential and classroom accommodations and made an ideal location for students to get a feel for Europe.

Lugano has a beautiful lakeside setting: it is the urban focus of Italian-speaking Switzerland, a cosmopolitan economic service center, and yet is compact enough to experience on foot. Tennis shoes were often the transport mode of choice, as students both trekked and ambled to a lot of places while getting a good bit of exercise going up and down the streets. Highlights included getting to know the city as geographers, and visits to special places like the home of Hermann Hesse, noted German author.

Two trips into the heart of the Alps, one to Valle Verzasca, the other to the mountain slopes nearby San Moritz provided memorable images of spectacular Alpine landscapes. Faculty visitor, Dr. Mark Fonstad, lectured on glacial landscapes in San Moritz (in context), while students worked with topo maps and GPS in Verzasca with Dr. Giordano. The mountain streams and waterfalls in Valle Verzasca allowed a

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DEPARTMENT ASSUMES GEOLOGY MINOR; DR. RENE DEHON HIRED AS GEOLOGY FACULTY MEMBER

by Philip W. Suckling

The Department of Geography has assumed administration of the University's undergraduate geology minor effective this semester. The administrative transition of the minor from the Department of Biology to the Department of Geography is now complete, while the physical move is well underway.

Renovations of room 120 from housing a faculty office and the James and Marilyn Lovell Center administrative offices into the new advanced GIS teaching lab are complete. The Lovell Center has moved upstairs into room 379. The former GIS lab in room 155 has been remodeled into the physical geography teaching lab. For the Fall, geology labs are still being taught in Centennial Hall although lectures are being taught in Evans. Room 156, the previous physical geography lab, is currently being remodeled to become our new geology teaching lab. An additional office is being refitted to serve as the microscope teaching lab for advanced geology courses, while the "dirty lab" (for the rock crusher, rock saws, sieves) is being housed in the Colorado Building where we already have the department's flume. The entire physical move will be complete by the beginning of classes in January.

The Department is pleased that we have been able to hire a very experienced instructor to serve as our new geologist. Dr. Rene DeHon obtained his PhD degree in geology from Texas Tech University in 1970. After holding teaching positions at Northwestern State University of Louisiana and the University of Arkansas at Monticello, Rene joined the faculty at the University of Louisiana at Monroe in 1977. After over 28 years of service at Monroe, during which he rose to the rank of full Professor, he retired in December 2005. Rene published approximately 40 scholarly works during his career and he taught a very wide range of geology courses. We are delighted that he has come out of retirement to join us as a Senior Lecturer with teaching responsibilities for the geology minor at Texas State University-San Marcos.



EUROPE FIELD PROGRAM

(Continued from page 3)

more than refreshingly cool dip. Other rural field experiences included a day on the spectacular Mediterranean coastline at Cinque Terre and a centuries-old winery in a truly quaint small village in Northern Italy.

The program included a good cross-section of urban Europe. As in past programs, we experienced the ambiance of Rome: the coliseum, the forum and the many piazzas with their great monuments and fountains. A day each in Florence and Venice allowed observation of city layouts, streets, transport, marketplaces and museums in smaller, yet world-famous cities. Alberto and Marta, indeed at home in Italy, added insight, a sense of humor and advice on which soccer team is worth following! In addition, we saw the leaning tower of Pisa with our own geography grad student from Pisa, Michele Tucci. Our timing for Nice on the French Riviera was perfect, arriving on the evening of their largest music festival of the year! And then zipping to Paris on the bullet train! Four days in Paris, logging impressions for the field study portion of the program...yes, learning and experiencing can and should be exciting!



RESEARCH IN GEOGRAPHIC EDUCATION JOURNAL HAS TWO ISSUES THIS YEAR

By Janet Dixon, Managing Editor, *Research in Geographic Education*

THE GROSVENOR CENTER FOR GEOGRAPHIC EDUCATION is putting the final touches on the next issue of their scholarly peer reviewed journal, *Research in Geographic Education*, due out this fall semester (between Thanksgiving and Christmas). This will be Volume 9 Number 2. The previous issue (Volume 9 Number 1) was published in the Spring of 2007, in time for the International Conference this past May in Chile. It was a Special Issue with articles from 22 distinguished Applied Geographers from around the world consisting of their auto-biographies of how they became applied geographers. Besides being interesting reading, it may be especially pertinent to note that we have two professors from our department who provided their stories (Dr. Larsen, Dr. Zhan), with Dr. Boehm writing the informative foreword that tied this issue together.

The upcoming issue returns to the standard format of refereed articles and book reviews. There's a running "theme" through this one that happened to just fall into place—as some of them do—with most of the articles pertaining to GEOGRAPHY CURRICULUM. There's a set of five discussion papers collected as a review of Phil and Carol Gersmehl's article published in Volume 8, 2006, on Spatial-Thinking Skills. The Gersmehl's have also provided a response to these papers, which is interesting in their take on the comments and criticisms from their colleagues.

There is also an article from one of our alums, Rachel Bailey—co-authored by Dr. Dixon—on national geography standards in state curriculum frameworks. From Singapore there is an article by Dr. Hung on web-based inquiry learning; and from North Carolina a group of people (Porter, Rossbach, and Cornelius) sent a piece in on the relationship between content preparation of teachers and high school enrollment size. Two book reviews round out the issue.

We welcome submissions of your articles for publication in the journal—from graduate students as well as faculty. This is an internationally peer-reviewed journal that publishes research-based manuscripts in the field of geographic education, encompassing a wide variety of subjects. According to the quantity of manuscripts received, we publish one to two volumes per year.

Yearly subscription rates (in North America) are \$30 for individuals and \$50 for institutions. [NOTE: Alkek Library is a subscriber, so there is a whole set there] The Special Issue (Vol. 9-1) of the Applied Geographer's auto-biographies is also being sold separately for \$40. (plus \$7 shipping). Of course, if you have a subscription (at \$30) you get BOTH Vol. 9-1 (the Special Issue) and Volume 9-2 (the upcoming issue)—WHAT A DEAL!!

To discuss possible topics, manuscripts, or subscriptions please contact Janet Dixon at jd49@txstate.edu, (512) 245-3206, or in ELA-154.

GEOGRAPHY STUDENTS EXPERIENCE THE “REAL” SOUTH AMERICA

By Dorothy Ibes

Texas State Geography graduate students experienced the “real” South America, many for the first time, during the Regional Field Studies course this May. The trip was not for the faint-hearted. Participants traveled in a 44-passenger bus, beginning in the dry, dusty, wind-swept, barren Atacama Desert zigzagging across desert, sky-scraping mountains, highlands, fertile valleys, and along the coast of the Pacific Ocean, ending in a huge metropolitan city of 5 million. The course coincided with the Grosvenor Center for Geographic Education *GeoAmericas: Geography in the Americas* conference in La Serena, Chile. Eight graduate students from Texas State, Dr. Richard Earl, and trip interpreter Dianne Champlin flew out of Austin-Bergstrom International Airport on May 14th and arrived in Santiago, Chile the next morning. During their layover in Santiago, the group enjoyed a 3-hour bus tour of the city during which they explored the *Parque Metropolitano* and experienced the city’s first rain of the year! Later that evening, the students flew to Iquique, Chile, and met up with the 25 other pre-conference fieldtrip participants before heading to Hotel Terrano, thus beginning the pre-conference field trip around Northern Chile.



On day one the group took a long, dusty, bumpy bus ride to *Salar de Huasco*, a salt flat in the *Altiplano* (“high plains”) of Northern Chile. On their way home from the salt flat, in the middle of the desolate dry desert with not a plant in site, the 44-passenger tour bus got a flat tire. A half hour later, with the help of a few big rocks, the bus was lifted high enough to change the tire, and they were off again. Soon the desolate dry desert gave way to an oasis hydrated by natural thermal springs, the small village of Pica. The group bought some fruits and candy from outside vendors before getting back on the bus and returning to Iquique.

The next morning, the 35 participants got back on the bus for a 6-hour bus ride to Calama, Chile, one of the driest cities in the world. They enjoyed a nice dinner and evening on the town and the next day, May 18th, they were on the bus again, headed for San Pedro de Atacama. On the way the group stopped for a tour of the largest open-pit copper mine in the world, *Chuquicamata*. They also visited the *Valle de la Luna* and the archeological village *Tulor*. They arrived in San Pedro de Atacama after dark and spent the evening in this popular bohemian city where open fires, live music, and dancers entertained them during dinner.

The next morning, the group headed to the *El Tatio* Geyser Field. Situated in the Andes Mountains at 14,000 feet above msl, *El Tatio* is home to over 80 active geysers. The following day, May 20th, the group boarded the tour bus once again for a

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TEXAS ALLIANCE TO OFFER TWO INSTITUTES IN SUMMER 2008

Don’t fill up that 2008 summer calendar just yet! Although the dates have yet to be determined, the Texas Alliance will be offering two great institutes during summer 2008 at Texas State University San Marcos, including:

Texas Alliance Summer Institute - a 2 week, in-residence workshop for geography educators who have been in the classroom for five years or less. Following the train-the-trainer model, this workshop is designed to motivate and cultivate the “next generation of leaders” for Texas K-12 geography.

Joint Geography and History Outreach Institute - a 1 week in-residence workshop for Teacher Consultants from Texas, Michigan, Mississippi and New York. Participants will become familiar with the national database of joint history/geography materials that is currently being developed as part of a National Geographic Model Grant Project, and will then develop professional development presentations based on these project materials that will be used to train other teachers.

DID YOU KNOW?

- ◆ The first Eagle Scout west of the Mississippi is buried in San Marcos, Texas.
- ◆ The annual Night of the Radishes is held in Oaxaca, Mexico. It’s held on December 23rd of every year as part of a pre-Christmas tradition. Farmers carve figures from radishes and display them in the city’s main plaza.
- ◆ Martha's Vineyard once had its own dialect of Sign Language. One deaf person arrived in 1692 and after that there was a relatively large genetically deaf population that had their own particular dialect of sign language. From 1692-1910 nearly all hearing people on the island were bilingual in sign language and English.

ALUMNI TIDBITS *By Mark L. Carter, Internship Director*

Sofia Vilella Nelson – Urban and Regional Planning Alumna - has just returned from a stint as an English teacher in Mexico after working as a planner with the City of San Marcos. Sofia reports that she and her husband traveled all over southern Mexico with a month long stay in Guadalajara and Zihuatanejo, which she says are two very beautiful cities. Sophia is back in Texas and recently accepted a new job in the planning department of the City of Leander working with the community's new composite zoning ordinance – the first of its kind! Good luck with your new position Sofia!

Marcie Mertz graduated from Texas State Geography in May 2004, then went on to complete a Masters Degree in Legal Studies from Texas State in 2006. Marcie currently works as a Lease and Title Administrator in the booming Texas wind energy business for Airtricity, Inc., an Irish-based renewable energy company which builds and operates wind farms. Marcie mentions that her firm uses GIS as an important tool for managing their business. Congratulations Marcie for finding employment in this new cutting-edge field!

Recent geography graduate **Lindsey McDougall** turned her internship experience with the City of Austin Watershed Protection Department – under the supervision of fellow geography alumni **Robbie Botto** - into a full-time job. In addition to her regular duties with the Watershed Protection Department, Lindsey is also helping to coordinate and promote the City of Austin's GIS day at City Hall, which provides an opportunity for the public to see and hear how the City of Austin's GIS community uses GIS for work and special projects. Lindsey says that she misses living in San Marcos and swimming in the river. Maybe you should come on back to San Marcos for a Master's Degree Lindsey!

GEO Alumna **Michelle Bussemey** recently graduated with a Geography Master's Degree and now works with the Nature Conservancy in San Antonio. Michelle tries to reduce her impact on the environment and her 'carbon-footprint' by using a combination of bicycling and bus trips - with her bike on the bus bike rack - to get to and from San Antonio and San Marcos! Michelle explains that she gets a lot of reading done on the bus and enjoys doing her part being good to the planet.

Spring 2007 graduate **Rick Young** finally made it to commencement! In his own words, Rick describes his quest for an undergraduate degree: "1977 to 2007 - 30 years in the making!" Rick is employed as a manager of the TCEQ partnership program located here on the Texas State Campus! Congratulations Rick! We're glad you realized your dream!

Recent Water-Studies graduate **Susan Meckel** realized her dream as well - protecting water quality in Central Texas –

by working with the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA). Susan's water-protection career was motivated by a water-quality issue on her family's property in Hays County that was documented in a story in the Hays County Free Press. Congratulations on turning a problem into an opportunity Susan!

http://haysfreepress.com/articles/2007/07/30/community_news/community4.txt

Other Geography Alumni employed with the LCRA include **Amanda Ross** and **Robin Berry**.

Greg Klaus (GEO BS-96, MAG-99, Ph.D-in progress) now lives in Boston, Massachusetts employed by International Power America (IPA) as Corporate Health, Safety & Environmental Manager. Greg helped establish an internship program partnering Texas State Geography and the Hays Energy Plant while still employed locally. IPA has power plants in operation or under construction in Australia, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, the Czech Republic, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Indonesia, Pakistan, Puerto Rico and Thailand, so expect some great travel opportunities Greg!

May 2004 graduate **Thomas Rhodes** works for the Central Texas Office of Mitchell Planning Group (founded by GEO Alumna **Karen Mitchell**) which provides planning consulting services to municipalities throughout the region, as well as providing development consulting services to private developers in the area. Thomas resides in Buda with his wife Tamara. Thomas explains that he: "helps maintain his family's 836 acre ranch in Comfort, Texas and enjoys spending his free time mountain biking, working on renovation projects in his new home and enjoying the many blessings that have been bestowed upon him."

Geography Alumni **Kurt Wiendefeld** serves as the Environmental, Health, and Safety Coordinator at the Hays International Power plant in San Marcos. Kurt makes sure that the plant is operating within the limits of its emission permits and helps keep the facility safe for its workforce. Kurt started at the plant as part the Geography Internship Program, demonstrating the importance of getting some experience prior to graduating.

Spring 2007 Geographic Information Science graduate **Aaron J. Preine** reports that he "gained employment as a GIS technician for P2 Energy Solutions" immediately

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ALUMNI TIDBITS

(Continued from page 6)

after graduation. Aaron credits his successful transition from student to professional in part by using the career-building strategies found in the popular volume *What color is your parachute?* which he recommends to all students interested in proactively managing their job search. **Cliff Walden**, another recent GIS graduate also works with P2 Energy Solutions - as a field data support technician.

Urban and Regional Planning Major **Brandon Smith** now works as a planner for Grand County, Colorado - about an hour west of Denver which includes the towns of Winter Park, Fraser and Hot Sulphur Springs. Brandon reports: "The area is awesome with more than 1,200 miles of mountain bike trails in Fraser/Winter Park alone plus the lift runs for downhill riding." Brandon also reports that Fraser, Colorado where he currently resides is known as the Nation's Ice Box. We will think of you during our mild Texas winter this year Brandon.

Also in Colorado, GIS Alumna **Kerry Lee** works as a GIS Analyst with an oil & gas company, Williams Production, located in Parachute, Colorado. Kerry writes: "The job is going great - so great in fact that my boyfriend and I are buying a house." Congratulations Kerry on your new job and your new home!

Rusty Rex - 2006 geography graduate - found employment with the URS Corporation. Rusty works with the ESRI suite of software on a wide range of projects including air quality, oil/gas/pipeline, environmental planning and floodplain mapping. Rusty reports that he and fellow geography alumni **Geoff Price** and **Heather Old** look forward to adding more Bobcat Geographers to their GIS staff. Rusty sends his best wishes: "hoping all is well in the Evans Building."

Eddie Wilcut employed by the San Antonio Water System (SAWS), proudly calls himself a Bobcat and Geography Alumni. Eddie recently notified us about a SAWS Water Conservation Fellowship program and exclaimed: "I am surrounded by a whole lot of Aggies in this organization. It would be really nice to get more Bobcats in here." **Jacob Floyd**, current Geography Master's student received one of these Fellowships. Thanks Eddie and congratulations Jacob!

Several recent geography graduates have accepted positions with environmental consulting firms. **John Klier** works out of the Austin office of Blanton and Associates. **Justin Sorrels** is employed with Parsons Consulting as a GIS Specialist / GPS Field Technician. **Leonard Voellinger** is an Environmental Planning Manager with Halff Associates. **Carissa Belsky** used her experience interning with the Texas Rivers Center to land a job with Crespo Consulting Services as a Water Resources Specialist. J. M. Waller Associates employs **Stephen Johnson** as a GIS Analyst and **Jason Turner** works as an Environmental Specialist for OnSite Environmental Services.

ALUMNI REUNION IS APRIL 26, 2008!



Alumni

Do you have e-mail addresses for other Texas State Geography Alumni? If so, please send their e-mail address to

angelika@txstate.edu

**CONGRATULATIONS! FELICITACIONES!! GLÜCKWÜNSCHE!!
CONGRATULAZIONI!! 恭喜你!! PARABÉNS!! ПОЗДРАВЛЕНИЯ!!**

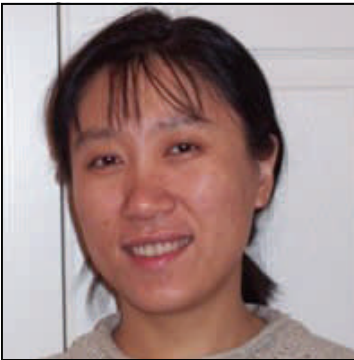


Provost Moore, with approval from President Trauth, has sent letters to our colleagues regarding promotion and tenure. These took effect September 1, 2007 subject to approval by the Board of Regents.

Congratulations to:

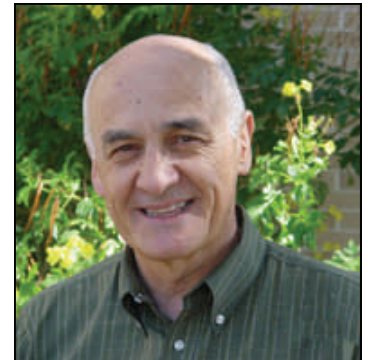
Dr. Richard Earl
promoted to
Full Professor

Dr. Alberto Giordano
promoted to
Associate Professor with
tenure



Dr. Yongmei Lu
promoted to
Associate Professor
with tenure

Dr. Osvaldo Muniz
for the granting
of tenure



Dr. Nate Currit has been selected as the director of the Center for Texas-Mexico Applied Research (CeTMAR).



Dr. David Butler received the university-wide Presidential Award for Excellence in Scholarly/Creative Activities for the Professor/Associate Professor rank at the University Convocation and Annual General Faculty Meeting held on August 21, as well as the College of Liberal Arts Golden Apple Award for Scholarly / Creative Activity.

Selected as this year's recipient of the university-wide Alumni Teaching Award, **Dr. Brock Brown** was also selected by the majors in the international studies program as the International Programs Professor for 2006 in recognition of his hard work and dedication to the internationalization of Texas State University's campus and curriculum.



The Non-Traditional Student Organization selected **Dr. Byron "Doc" Augustin** for their annual "Professor of the Year Award." Doc also received the "Faculty Award for Outstanding Achievement in International Education for 2007" presented by members of NAFSA: Association of International Educators at Texas State

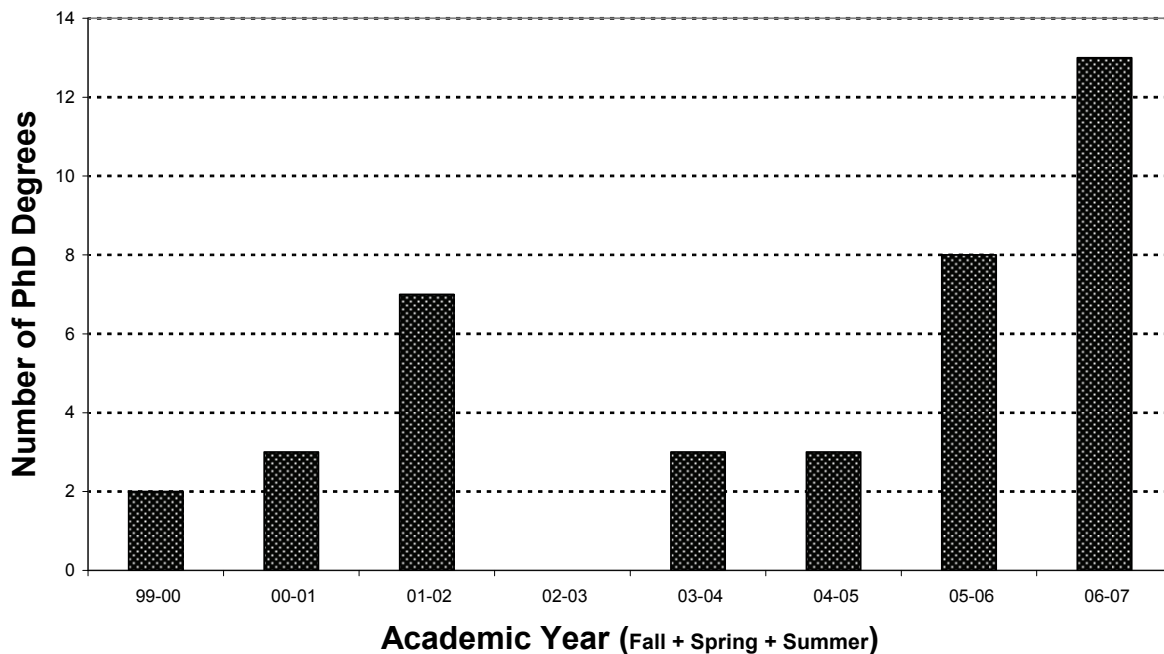


PHD GRADUATES IN GEOGRAPHY AT TEXAS STATE by Philip W. Suckling

The PhD program in Geography was the first doctoral program established at Texas State University-San Marcos (then Southwest Texas State University), enrolling its first students in 1996. Initially, there were two programs: Environmental Geography and Geographic Education. The first two students graduated from the Environmental Geography PhD program in May 2000 while the first two Geographic Education PhD degrees were awarded in August 2001. The third geography doctoral program was initiated in 2002 in the area of Geographic Information Science. The first two GIScience PhD degrees were awarded in May 2006.

As of August 2007, 39 PhD degrees have been awarded by the Department of Geography, including 24 in Environmental Geography, 9 in Geographic Education, and 6 in Geographic Information Science. Almost half (19 of the 39) have been women, which is a much higher percentage than the national rate within the discipline. Of the 39 total doctorates awarded, 21 have graduated during the past two academic years.

PhDs Degrees Awarded
Department of Geography, Texas State University-San Marcos



The recent increase in the graduation rate is an indication of a rapidly maturing doctoral program. Another indication of this maturation is that 17 different faculty members have now served as the major advisor of a PhD graduate. During the 2006-07 academic year, five faculty members graduated their first doctoral student.

Our doctoral alumni have been very successful on the job market. In terms of current or last known position, our doctoral graduates are employed as follows: 20 in academic positions at Universities, 5 in other educational positions, 9 in governmental or university research positions, and 5 in the private sector. One of the first graduates is now a tenured Associate Professor.

The number of geography doctoral graduates and their subsequent success on the job market is important to the University as it endeavors to justify the establishment of additional PhD programs on campus. This is recognized by the University administration as evidenced by recent praise by the Provost for our PhD program.

NOTES FROM JOYCE

By Joyce Lawson, Geography Undergraduate Advisor

Welcome 2007 Geography FIG Students!

Group Advising begins:

Advance registration for Spring 2008 will begin October 22nd.

Group advising sessions for Advance Registration for Spring 2008 will begin Oct. 9th – 11th, and Oct. 15th, 17th & 19th two session a day at 9:00am & 1:00pm.

Request a degree Audit after completion of 45hrs and degree summary in your last 60 hours.

Deadlines to remember:

February - Geography Scholarship Application due

Financial Aid for Fall 2008/2009 – priory deadline is March 1. You can start applying as early as Jan. 1, 2008.

Texas State NEW policies on dropping courses:

The deadline for an automatic W this semester is Tuesday October 23, which is later than in the past. This new policy actually allows a student to stay in a class longer before they may decide to drop and still be able to receive a grade of "W."

After October 23-a student can only receive a grade of A, B, C, D, or F. If a student decides to withdraw from the University altogether (i.e. Student will have no classes left in which they are enrolled for fall) they have until Monday, November 19 to do so. However, the grades will not automatically be W's- regardless of whether the student is passing the class or not.

The only two grades which can be assigned at this point are "W" or "F." The faculty members have the option to assign a "W" if the student is passing and an "F" if the student is failing, but the faculty is under no obligation to assign a W.



CONGRATULATIONS!



Welcome Curtis Holden Bilbrey, first grandchild of Pat Hell-Jones and Kenny Jones. Curtis was born August 14, 2007. Congratulations to parents Casey and Jessica Bilbrey!

CONGRATULATIONS!

Our proposal to Technology Resources to upgrade the ELA 149 computers for the cartography lab has been approved. This is the third year in a row that Technology Resources has approved a Geography proposal. Special thanks to Dan Hemenway for his excellent proposal writing!



CONGRATULATIONS!



Dr. Nate Currit, wife Amy, and sister Elisabeth welcomed 6 lb. 5 oz. 19" Isabel Anna into the world at 11:43 pm Tuesday, July 24, 2007. We wish the entire Currit family a healthy, happy life!

DOC AUGUSTIN MAKES THE BIG TIME!



JAMES AND MARILYN LOVELL CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL GEOGRAPHY AND HAZARDS RESEARCH (JMLC) NEWS

By Pamela S. Showalter, Director

New Center Quotation, Courtesy of James and Marilyn Lovell

A new quote that reads, "From the Moon, our Earth is a grand oasis that requires constant protection from environmental problems" can be seen on the poster outside the Center door (3rd Floor, Room 379). Over the summer, the Lovell's kindly supplied this quote to provide the Center with a "guiding phrase" that will be incorporated into all Center publications, logos, and the like. If you travel to the 4th floor of JCK, you'll see another Center poster with that quote. The JCK poster is somewhat less detailed than the one outside Room 379, but equally attractive!

New Graduate Assistant

JMLC welcomes Jiao Wang as the Center's new Graduate Research Assistant. Jiao is holding office hours in the Center, making it available to Center Scholars and Student Affiliates Mondays from 9-5 and on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2-5. Center Scholars and Student Affiliates can use the Center and its resources for meetings, examining large maps, or to browse the publications Jiao is currently inventorying including articles published by Center Scholars, issues of *Storm Data*, and the journals *Photogrammetric Engineering and Remote Sensing*, *Geocarto International*, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* and *Professional Geographer*. Also available is a significant amount of Texas Tornado data that has been collected, as well as a number of books and other publications focusing on environmental geography and hazards.

Welcome to Faculty Scholars, Student Affiliates and Center Affiliate

The following Department of Geography faculty and students, as well as one non-geography faculty member have joined JMLC this Fall. Faculty and their interests include **Fellow** Pamela S. Showalter (Director--hazards, digital image analysis, land use/

land change, coastal development), **Distinguished Scholars** R. Denise Blanchard (past Director-- natural and environmental hazards, environmental studies) and David R. Butler (past Director-- geomorphic hazards, mountain environments, zoogeomorphology), **Senior Scholars** Richard W. Dixon (past Director--climatology, oceanography) and Ronald R. Hagelman, III (environmental geography, hazards), and **Scholars** Nate Currit (land use/land cover change, remote sensing), Frederick Day (social and economic impact of population change), René De Hon (planetary geology/geomorphology, terrestrial analogs of planetary features), Richard A. Earl (water resources, floods), J. Ron Eyton (Professor Emeritus--remote sensing, digital terrain modeling), Mark Fonstad (water resources, remote sensing, GIS), Sven Fuhrmann (GIScience, 3-D visualization and interaction), Alberto Giordano (GIScience policy applications), Don Huebner (medical geography, coastal haz-



Framed "Distinguished Scholar" certificates were presented to Drs. Butler and Blanchard (not pictured), and "Senior Scholar" certificates were presented to Drs. Dixon and Hagelman (not pictured) during the Center's September 11 meeting.

ards), Wook Lee (transportation, spatial analysis, GIS), Yongmei Lu (GIS, urban and regional analysis, environment and health), Susan Macey (natural/technological hazards, environmental health issues), Osvaldo Muniz-Solari (Latin America, corporate environmental impact), Kevin Romig (urbanization, commodification of natural resources), David Stea (Professor Emeritus--border issues), Philip Suckling (climatology, natural hazards), and Ben Zhan (GIScience, health and the environment, transportation network science). **Student Affiliates** include Justin Clinger, Mitch Crader, Sophia Gonzales, Dorothy Ibes, Eric Samson, Case Watkins, and Suzi Wiseman. Finally, JMLC welcomes **Center Affiliate** (non-Geography Faculty) Dr. Warren Pulich, a wetlands ecologist with the River Systems Institute and Adjunct Professor in the Department of Biology.

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SPRING DISTINGUISHED LECTURE PRESENTER ANNOUNCED

By Dr. Pamela S. Showalter,

The James and Marilyn Lovell Center for Environmental Geography and Hazards Research (JMLC) is delighted to announce that the Spring Distinguished Lecture will be presented by Dr. Sylvia Earle, National Geographic Explorer in Residence and JMLC Board Member. Dr. Earle's visit is possible with significant support from the University's Common Experience (CE; visit <http://www.txstate.edu/commonexperience>) through the efforts of Drs. Pam Wuestenberg (Psychology) and Nico Schuler (Music). This year's CE theme, "A River Runs Through Us," is a perfect backdrop for a speaker who has spent her life caring about our water planet and we're extremely grateful for CE's assistance. Others supporting her visit include Deans Ann Marie Ellis (Liberal

Arts) and Hector Flores (Science), Dr. Heather Galloway (Mitte Honors Program), Dr. Mike Abbot (River Systems Institute), and, of course, our very own Departmental Chair, Dr. Philip Suckling.

Sylvia Earle's credentials are numerous. Oceanographer, explorer, author, lecturer, and field research scientist, she holds a B.S. from Florida State University, an M.S. and Ph.D. from Duke University, and 15 honorary degrees. Labeled "Her Deepness" by the *New Yorker* and the *New York Times*, named *Time Magazine's* first "Hero for the Planet" in 1999, and called a "Living Legend" by the Library of Congress, she has authored more than 150 scientific, technical, and popular publications, lectured in more than 60 countries, and appeared in



Dr. Sylvia Earle

(Photo credit: www.kepplerspeakers.com/speakers/speakers.asp?1+EV+2166.)

hundreds of television productions. Director of over 60 diving expeditions (including the first team of women aquanauts--the 1970 "Tektite Project"), she has logged more than 6000 hours underwater and set the record for solo diving

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BUTLER INVITED TO SWITZERLAND

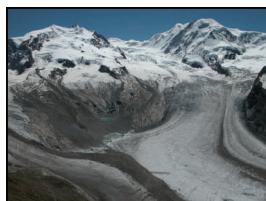


Left to right: Dr. David Butler, Dr. Michelle Bollschweiler and Dr. Markus Stoffel

In July 2007, Professor **David R. Butler** served as an External Reviewer for a Ph.D. doctoral dissertation defense held in the Department of Geosciences at the University of Fri-

bourg, Switzerland. While there, Dr. Butler delivered an invited lecture to the University on "Natural Hazards and Tree-Ring Dating in Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park, Canada & U.S.A.". After a successful dissertation defense, Dr. Markus Stoffel, advisor, and newly minted Dr. Michelle Bollschweiler took Dr. Butler and his wife Dr. Janet Butler on a fieldtrip in the Valais Alps, culminating in a cog-rail trip to the Gornergrat observatory above the ski village of Zermatt.

Views of the Matterhorn along the train ride were fantastic, as were the views of the Gornergletscher (right) and its tributaries.



PETERSEN INVITED TO GERMANY

Dr. James Petersen was invited by the Christian Albrechts Universität zu Kiel in Kiel, Germany, to give a colloquium on Central Texas geography June 16-24. The colloquium was part of a city-wide festival in Kiel, in which international scientists and scholars are invited to participate. Petersen's colloquium was titled "Geomorphology of Granite Landforms in Central Texas, USA."

Petersen's invitation was an outgrowth of his collegial relationship with a Kiel faculty member, Dr. Rainer Duttmann, of the university's Geographisches Institut. Duttmann, who uses computer visualization to study land formations and environmental problems around the world, has traveled with Petersen and Texas State students to Big Bend National Park in Texas. Petersen and Duttmann hope to collaborate in the future on research related to environmental problems and land forms. Petersen also hopes to find and develop opportunities for Texas State students to visit and exchange scholarship with students and faculty at the University of Kiel.



JMLC DISTINGUISHED LECTURE

(Continued from page 12)

(1000 meters, or 3281 feet). Earle has served as NOAA's Chief Scientist and as Executive Director for corporate and non-profit organizations such as American Rivers, the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, and the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation. She has been inducted into institutions such as the National Women's Hall of Fame and the American Academy of Achievement, and has received numerous medals from organizations such as the Explorers Club, the Philadelphia Academy of Sciences, the National Wildlife Federation, and the Society of Women Geographers. As President of Deep Search International and Chair of the Advisory Council for the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies, her work focuses on marine ecosystems with special attention to exploration, development and use of new technologies for access and effective operations in the deep sea and other remote environments. As of this writing, Dr. Earle is scheduled to be on campus March 26--pencil the date into your calendar to come hear her speak, and watch the next departmental newsletter for updates!

JMLC NEWS

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Occasional Papers

The Center is very pleased to announce that it has recently published Occasional Paper (OP) No. 2, and OP No. 3 is in progress. The authors of OP No. 2 are Forrest Wilkerson and Ginger Schmid, past graduates of our department. Their OP title is, *The Creation of Baranca de Caliza: Excavation of the Canyon Lake Spillway Gorge, Comal County Texas, July 2002*, and includes data collected by the department's field methods class. The paper examines the creation of a canyon carved by floodwaters flowing through the emergency spillway at Canyon Lake Reservoir. The flood scoured a gently sloping spillway channel into a mile-long canyon, depositing car-size boulders, gravels, and mounds of sediment onto the floodplain. The field methods class organized a project to measure the amount of bedrock removed by the floodwaters, and the paper documents the storm event that led to the erosion, the methods used to measure the spillway channel, and the results of the measurements (many interesting figures, tables, and color photographs are included). OP No. 3 is being authored by Professor Emeritus J. Ron Eyton--his working title is *Experiments in Landscape Remote Sensing* and its appearance is anticipated later this Fall. OPs are now available on the Center's website (<http://www.geo.txstate.edu/lovell/publications/>) as downloadable PDF files --pay us a visit and take a look!

Radio Interview

Outgoing Director and **Distinguished Scholar**, Professor Denise Blanchard, was interviewed July 31 by Peter Brown, host of Edmonton, Alberta's "Radio Active," an afternoon public-interest radio show owned and aired by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. The interview was held on the 20th anniversary of the "Black Friday" F4 tornado that tore through east Edmonton for more than an hour, cutting a path of destruction more than 25 miles long. The occurrence caught most of the residents, who were preparing for a holiday weekend, by surprise, killing 27 and injuring more than 300 people.

According to Blanchard, "The CBC interview came out of the blue. I was on vacation in Dillon, Colorado (post-hazards workshop) and found the request on my e-mail one day. The producer of 'Radio Active,' Gillian Rutherford, wrote that they were doing some special programming to mark the 20th anniversary of the Edmonton tornado and would like to speak with me. I guess she did some kind of word search and found the article Jeff and I wrote and published in IRGEE in 2004 (Blanchard-Boehm, Denise and Jeffrey M. Cook. 2004. Risk Communication and Public Education in Alberta, Canada on the 10th Anniversary of the "Black Friday" Tornado. *International Research in Geographical and Environmental Education* 13[1]: 33-52). One of the points that I emphasized in the interview was how the media can be of great service and assistance by using anniversary dates to present safety and preparedness information. They really liked that. It was a neat experience."

JMLC Research "Samplings"

Distinguished Scholar Denise Blanchard and **Student Affiliate** Mitch Crader are writing up their research on 20 post-

(Continued on page 17)

INDEPENDENT FILMMAKER MARSHALL FRECH, DELIVERS NINTH ANNUAL LOVELL CENTER DISTINGUISHED LECTURE, *THE WATER'S EDGE*

By Dr. Denise Blanchard, Out-going Director, Lovell Center

On February 27, 2007, the James and Marilyn Lovell Center for Environmental Geography and Hazards Research presented its Ninth Distinguished Lecture entitled, "Water's Edge: Profits and Policy Behind the Rising Catastrophe of Floods," given by award-winning writer and producer of educational public service film projects, Mr. Marshall Frech. University President, Denise Trauth, welcomed Mr. Frech to an audience of more than 225 students, faculty, upper-level administrators, state emergency managers and community leaders.

With "Water's Edge," Mr. Frech delivered a stimulating and thought-provoking talk based on his most recent film documentary of the experiences of central Texas residents during the 1998 and 2002 major flood occurrences. The film offered a well-researched critique of the systemic failures behind the deadliest and most costly natural disaster—flooding. Compelling flood victims, renowned scientists, and amazing footage was shown from recent events and revealed how government and business interests perpetuate flood catastrophes. In "The Water's Edge," the film exposes the pseudo-science behind the '100-year flood' and presents it as a deadly convenience that fosters delu-

sional building and rebuilding in harm's way.

Frech commented that, "Tens of thousands will suffer each year all across this country but their misfortune churns huge profits few have considered. Events like Hurricane Katrina have just begun to open our eyes to the politics and economics underlying natural disasters." Frech further explained that, "New Orleans' fate was clearly foretold five weeks before Katrina, so we can see how financial incentives in the politically driven aftermath of floods (along the Gulf Coast and elsewhere) ensured that much worse disasters are likely in the near future."

"Water's Edge" is a multi-part-series on the growing problems that floods present to our ever-urbanizing society. The film continues to air on PBS stations throughout the United States, along with his previous film, *Flash Flood Alley*, a documentary that followed five families who rebuilt their lives after the great Central Texas Flood of 1998.

In addition to *The Water's Edge* and *Flash Flood Alley*, Mr. Frech has also written, *Barton Springs Eternal*, and produced several award-winning, interactive CD-ROM's including, *Barton Springs Interactive*, *Green By Design*, and

Flood Safety, a companion tool for use with the website Flood-Safety.com. Mr. Frech has also appeared in other broadcast media, such as The Weather Channel's documentary, *It Could Happen Tomorrow*.

Marshall Frech is currently the director of the national Flood Safety Program and President of Vantage Point Media in Boulder, Colorado. He is one of the official biographers of Gilbert F. White, a geographer who pioneered the study of flood hazards. One of Marshall's most recent films includes a biography that addresses the life and legacy of Dr. White. Marshall has partnered and produced media for highly-visible public organizations such as the Environmental Protection Agency, and the U. S. Geological Service. Within the State of Texas, Marshall has professional associations with many flood-related organizations including Lower Colorado River Authority, Rice University, the San Antonio River Authority, the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority, the City of Austin, the City of New Braunfels, the City of Dallas, the Texas Center for Policy Studies, and the Harris County Flood Control District.

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REGIONAL FIELD STUDIES IN CHILE

(Continued from page 5)

long ride to Antofagasta and caught their flight to La Serena for the conference. Upon arrival in La Serena, the group settled into their hotels and the next day enjoyed a city tour of Coquimbo, a port city and capital of the Elqui Province.

The *GeoAmericas: Geography in the Americas* Conference started on Tuesday, May 21st 2007. Many of the students and other participants presented their research in Geography during the next 4 days. During the conference, participants enjoyed a Chilean Style Barbecue

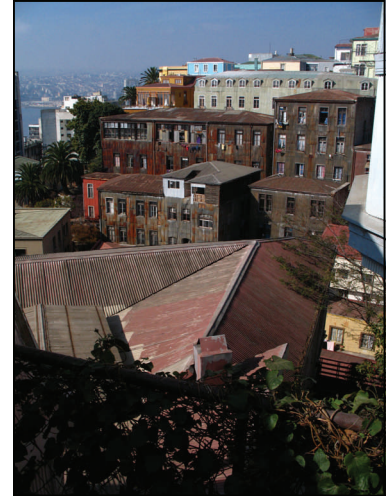


reception, a Presidential Plenary Lunch and speech by Kingsley E. Haynes on Urban Transportation Infrastructure in the Americas, Poster and Presentation Sessions, and an Awards Luncheon.

Friday and Saturday, May 25-26, participants joined local field trips to the Elqui Valley and Fray Jorge Cloud Forest. Elqui Valley is the wine producing

region of Chile and home to the famous Chilean poet and literature Nobel Prize winner Gabriela Mistral. Participants visited the Gabriela Mistral museum and later stopped in a small mountain town of the wine-producing region named Pisco Elqui to shop and enjoy the views. They also toured the Capel plant where *Pisco*, the region's famous brandy-like liquor made from Muscatel grapes, is produced. The next day's tour of the Fray Jorge National Park took participants through 25,000 acres of protected land that encompass a wide variety of ecosystems from desert to abundantly vegetated areas due to the location on the coast, variety of elevation, and the *camanchaca* (condensation of the coastal mist).

On May 27th the students and a new set of 30 conference participants set off for the last leg of their adventure: the post-conference field trip. They all piled in the bus once again and headed south to Viña del Mar. The next day the group toured Valparaíso, Chile's most important port city. They toured the town, visited the Chilean Congress, and a local museum. On May 29th the group drove to Santiago where they visited Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile and enjoyed a lavish seafood dinner at Los Dominicos Market. On May 30th the participants made a trip to the Farellones ski area of Chile and on the



31st, most of the participants flew back to the United States, while others went on to other locations or back to their home countries. In only 17 days the group traveled by bus and plane across and over 1130 miles of this fascinating country nestled between the Andes and the Pacific Ocean for an unforgettable journey down south.

PH.D. / DOCTORAL NEWS...

- **Bharati Ayyalasomayajula**, GIScience Ph.D. graduate (August 2007), accepted a research associate position at the University of Florida Citrus Research and Education Center in Lake Alfred, Florida.
- Ph.D. graduate **Ellen Foster** (May 2006) recently accepted a faculty position in social studies education in the College of Education at the University of Mississippi.
- Environmental Geography Ph.D. graduate **Mark Jeff Cook** (May 2007) is working as a Disaster Recovery & Operations Specialist for FEMA in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- **Xiaomin Qiu** (May 2006) accepted a tenure track position as Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography, Geology and Planning at Missouri State University.
- **Shing Lin** (August 2007) is working as a graduate intern for ESRI in Redlands, California.
- May 2006 graduate **Xuwei Chen** is an assistant professor at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Illinois.
- **Cathryn Springer** (August 2007) is an assistant professor at Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville, Illinois.
- Ph.D. graduate (December 2006) **Darlene Occena-Gutierrez** is a professor at the University of the Philippines.

UPCOMING STUDENT ORGANIZATION MEETINGS

NAEP

National Association of Environment Professionals
Meets in Evans 311 at 5:00 pm on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday each month.



SPO

Student Planning Organization
Please see the bulletin board outside Evans 156 for meeting dates and times.

GTU

Gamma Theta Upsilon Geography Honor Society
Meets in Evans 311 at 5:00 pm on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday each month.

SOGIS

Student Organization for GIScience
Meets in Evans. Contact SOGIS at sogis@geo.txstate.edu for information on upcoming meetings.

SWIG

Supporting Women in Geography
Meets in ELA 314 on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month at 12:30 p.m.

UNDERGRADUATE PICNIC FUN!!



The annual Undergraduate picnic was held Thursday, September 20, 2007. Hot dogs, veggie dogs, hamburgers and veggie burgers were enjoyed by all while socializing by the San Marcos River.

Thanks to Dr. Rich Earl for acting as B-B-Q Master, Dr. Suckling for department support, Mr. Mark Carter for the great photos, Dr. Brock Brown for Wizard of Geography skills, and all the other students, faculty members and staff who helped make this year's picnic a rousing success!



November

Nov. 21 - 23 - Thanksgiving



December

- Dec. 3 - Last Class Day**
- Dec. 4 - 11 - Final Exams**
- Dec. 14 - 15 - Commencement**
- Dec. 15 - Residence Halls close**
- Dec. 17 - Grades Available on Cats-Web**
- Dec. 19 - Jan. 1 - Winter Break**



January

- Jan. 14 - Spring Semester begins**
- Jan. 21 - MLK Birthday**
- Jan. 30 - 12th Class Day**



MOHAN SELECTED AS GROSVENOR SCHOLAR

Audrey M. Mohan, a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Geography at Texas State University San Marcos, has been selected to serve as the 2007-08 Grosvenor Scholar. Ms. Mohan, a native of Burnet, Texas, will assume her role as Grosvenor Scholar in August, succeeding 2006-07 Grosvenor Scholar Zach Moore, a third-year doctoral student in geographic education.

Ms. Mohan earned a bachelor of arts in history from the University of Notre Dame in 2002. She then began teaching high school geography in Burnet, Texas, while she worked on a master's degree in education at the University of Texas-Austin. It was during her years as a geography teacher that Mohan decided to pursue a doctoral degree in geographic education. As a doctoral student, Audrey's research interests include geographic education in K-12 and higher education, specifically in regards to geography teacher preparation and learning.



The Grosvenor Scholar Program, developed as a partnership between Texas State University, the Roy F. and Joann Cole Mitte Foundation, and the National Geographic Society (NGS), provides a one-year residency at NGS headquarters in Washington, D.C. for a Texas State doctoral student in geographic or environmental education. The Grosvenor Scholar participates in various aspects of the geographic education mission of the Society, assisting NGS Education Foundation personnel with their public advocacy campaign, grant making initiatives, and their newly launched public engagement initiative.

For additional information about the Grosvenor Scholar Program at Texas State, contact Dr. Richard Boehm, Director, Grosvenor Center for Geographic Education, at (512) 245-3615 or rb03@txstate.edu.

JMLC NEWS

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Katrina/post-Rita evacuee families, who they followed and interviewed over a period of about a year. **Scholar** Don Huebner is studying the spatial distribution of *Vibrio vulnificus*, which the press often refers to as "flesh eating bacteria"--it is not, but it is dangerous. Huebner is interested in the environmental factors that most affect the presence of *Vibrio vulnificus* in the water column. The goal is to develop a predictive model to inform the public of *Vibrio vulnificus* "hotspots" so people using coastal waters may avoid this potentially fatal infection. **Fellow** Pam Showalter and **Center Affiliate** Warren Pulich are continuing their work on land use/land cover change as it relates to water quality in the Chocolate Bay/Hall's Bayou area of Texas. Additionally, they're performing digital image analysis of color photographs taken of seagrass beds along Texas' Gulf coast. Showalter is also working with Dr. Sally Caldwell (Sociology) to complete a final report to the USDA describing their examination of alternative agriculture in Hays County.

ADVENTURES ON WYOMING'S HIGHEST MOUNTAIN

By Jon Kedrowski

Growing up in Colorado and living in the mountains of the west, I have had the privilege of climbing and making Colorado's mountains my very own special playground. More recently it has become my academic and research office, so to speak. Regardless of the climbing experiences in my life, this past summer's trip was one of the most exciting trips in my climbing career. Gannett Peak (13,804') is not only Wyoming's highest mountain, but it is also the most isolated highpoint out of all 50 states (including Denali in Alaska). Round trip distance from trailhead to summit and back down again, including all the technical climbing was about 52 miles! I had the unique opportunity to be joined by a longtime friend and former college roommate of mine, Fox-Denver Meteorologist Chris Tomer, and we headed north to Wyoming and the Wind River Range.



Photo 1 Upper Titcomb Lake

After a 7 hour drive, we arrived in the little Wyoming town of Pinedale. From there we began our drive up to the Elkhart park trailhead, which is the launching portal for accessing the Wind Rivers. August is the peak backcountry season for the Wind Rivers, and the Elkhart Park Trailhead was packed, indicating a lot of backcountry visitors to the multiple areas of the wilderness.

Tuesday August 7th we started our trek into Titcomb basin and Gannett. The twin lakes of Lower and Upper Titcomb basin are absolutely phenomenal in terms of scenery, with a striking turquoise color (Photo 1). The mountains themselves forming the deep basin are all solid rock granite. Wednesday August 8th we headed toward the upper portions of Titcomb basin and on a direct line up towards the 12,600-foot Bonney Pass. Gaining the pass was important in order for us to get into the Dinwoody Basin and then climb up Gannett's southern route to the summit. The majority of the route up the pass angles onto about a 30-degree rubble field of talus and granite boulders. At the summit of Bonney Pass we finally gained our first full live glimpse of Gannett Peak, towering across the valley in front of us (Photo 2). We also looked down Bonney Pass to the relatively large Dinwoody Glacier.

Once at the bottom of the Gooseneck glacier it was clear that most of the glacier had to be bypassed on the left (south) side by climbing up some moderate class 3 rock for about 300 vertical feet. The Gooseneck glacier was very steep and crevassed with large cracks and voids along its entire distance until about the last 300 feet of its upper portion. From this point we could see the summit of Gannett nearly 1700 vertical feet above us. After some pleasant scrambling and route finding for 300 feet or so up the left side of the glacier on the solid granite rock,



Photo 2 Gannett seen here from the Dinwoody Glacier at 11,200' on the traverse

Chris and I gained access to the glacier and came within view of the rest of the route. The Upper portion of the Gooseneck glacier was spectacular. The glacial sheet was cut into the side of Gannett's southeast face, and it was clear that many thousands of years of ice had done its work upon the spectacular cirque we were heading towards. To the left rising up high was the Gooseneck Pinnacle, a prominent shark-fin tower protruding up from Gannett's Southeast ridge flank.

We continued up the glacier and toward the end of the ice and slightly angling up to the left side of the cirque and the large granite wall. In another 200 feet we approached and finally stood on the route's crux: a rather large bergshroud crevasse next to the granite wall and leading up a 70-degree ice and snow chute for another 400 feet to gain the actual southeast ridge crest. The bergshroud crevasse itself was about 20-30 feet wide and in some places a void of unknown

CLIMBING GANNET PEAK



Photo 3 Climbing the ice and snow face above the bergshroud, "the crux"

depth. The good fortune of the trip came to us when I observed a 5 to 10 foot wide snowbridge crossing the bergshroud and then connecting directly to a vertical ice face. The vertical section actually angled slightly to the left off of the bridge for 5 feet or so, which placed the route over a considerably exposed abyss (Photo 3).

Once I was set to get up the section, I had Chris wait and watch from the opposite side of the snowbridge as I crossed and carefully began to kick some steps and front-point my way up and onto the 70-degree ice face. Once securely on the face, I got into rhythm and pushed myself up the ice face for about 60 feet in order to get onto a rocky outcropping that also served as a great viewpoint to coach Chris up the crux. Chris got halfway up the steps of the vertical wall and onto the face, and with a good strong effort he made his way up to me on the rock outcropping. Chris followed me as we climbed another 200 feet of ice and then another 150 feet of bouldering to reach the ridge crest. I turned and climbed up the ice and soon we were on the boulders and onto the ridge crest a few minutes later. At this point it really dawned on me....we were going to make the summit! We still had another 250 vertical feet and about two more football fields of real estate to cover, but the ridge was some easy ledge hiking and scrambling on solid granite.

Reaching the summit was a very exciting moment and the views were incredible. Gannett is flanked by 7 glaciers on all sides and there are jagged mountain peaks in all directions (Photo 4). We could see west to Grand Teton, south back to our camp in Titcomb, north towards Yellowstone, and east into the Glacier valley. We both signed the summit registers and took our photos and I marked the summit with my GPS unit. What a great day the trip turned out to be, beautiful weather, and an experience in my climbing career to remember for a long time.

Gannett Peak: If You Decide to Go

Gannett Peak is located in the northern Wind River Mountain Range on the Continental Divide (in both the Fitzpatrick and Bridger Wilderness Areas), in west-central Wyoming (Fremont & Sublette Counties). 25 miles north-northeast of Pinedale. Looking at a map of the Wind River Mountains, locate Green River Lakes and New Fork Lakes north of Pinedale. Split the difference between the two lakes and go east approximately 10 air miles until you hit the Continental Divide and you'll see Gannett Peak. The Peak is usually climbed in July, August, and September.

To get to the trailhead, look for prominent signs near the east end of Pinedale, WY where U.S. 191 curves, and take the paved road north out of town towards Fremont and Half Moon lakes. Follow the road three miles to a junction. Bear right and head for Elkhart Park and arrive at a large paved parking area 14 miles from Pinedale.



Photo 4 Looking SW getting my own summit shots (Bonney Pass is on the left as well as Fremont Pk)

WHAT I DID FOR GEOGRAPHY

By Eric Samson

Field research in Chiapas, Mexico sounded like a camping trip to me so I lugged lots of camping gear with me: tent, gas stove, sleeping bag, boots, all that. My research plan entailed visiting five Zapatista (rebel) communities so I realistically envisioned the need to have all of this stuff for my comfort and/or survival.

As I visited the first four places on my list, my comfort was always attended to by the community. I never wore my boots, my tent remained unopened, I used my sleeping bag once to avoid an offered hammock that might not have supported my gringo girth, and there was always food offered to me - very hospitable those Zapatistas. Most important to my comfort was that each place I visited was accessible by some form of motorized transportation - sometimes like livestock in the back of a truck but at least I wasn't walking.

So, when it came time to visit the last community on my list, Emiliano Zapata, I conjured my experience and decided to throw a couple tee shirts and a hammock in my bag along with my GPS, camera, and water testing kit to finish my summer research project. I had saved this community for my last visit since it was in the neighboring *municipio* (county, more or less) and was sure to be an easy trip.

My first clue that I had been presumptive about the easiness of this trip was that there were no roads to this next door *municipio* unless I traveled through three other *municipios* to get there. This was OK – only about five hours more than I had planned but all by car on paved roads.

When I got to the *cabecera* (county seat) I knew I was in trouble. 200 Mexican pesos (what I had paid to travel seven hours to the *cabecera*) to go two hours on dirt roads to get to the point of embarkation to the Emiliano Zapata community – where it was then FOUR HOURS on foot to get there!

I certainly wished that I had brought my boots. But I set out in my sandals with guides to help me (they radioed ahead – very organized those Zapatistas). Up a mountain, down a mountain, up a mountain, down a mountain. And then up a mountain when it started to rain – pour. I only fell in the mud once – the disgusting part was walking through dirty water in my blistered, sandaled feet (field researcher's note: get tetanus shot).



We finally arrived at Emiliano Zapata well after the four hours I was told the trip would last. By this time my presumptions were washed away with all the rain and mud. I was, however, glad to not be carrying all of my gear (except for my boots). The community was having a *fiesta* in celebration the Virgin of Carmen and my arrival made things even more festive – quite the party throwers those Zapatistas. A group of boys tricked me into dancing by saying they were afraid to dance with the women alone so I went and started dancing – the women left and the boys didn't follow. So I danced in the mud alone (and didn't fall) while those in attendance watched. I think I know something about how Ishi felt now.

Those who spoke Spanish, which I speak, (many only spoke *Tsotsil*, an indigenous language in Chiapas, which I don't speak) unfailingly asked me how long it took me to get there. As I found out, it's great rhetoric in Emiliano Zapata to brag on how short a time it takes to get to the "hammock," the local designation for the

"The Hammock"

(Continued on page 21)

FIELD ASSUMPTIONS GONE AWRY

(Continued from page 20)

foot bridge (pictured on pg. 20) near the road to the *cabecera*. One hour and forty-five minutes was the average boast.

Then it was explained to me that the clinic, where I was housed, was built by blocks carried three at a time on the same route that I had just barely carried myself (did I mention that my guides insisted on carrying my book bag?). As was every bag of cement, and the two large freezers used to store vaccines (solar powered since there were no utility lines), and the solar panels, and every other thing that was needed that could not be grown or eked from the land – very cooperative those Zapatistas.

“The Hammock” is about 100 meters long, not accounting for slope. Boards are wired to the cables, which are suspended across the river. Making sure to walk on the cables is the best way to avoid breaking boards. Toward the middle of “the hammock,” the constructors got very stingy with boards and the spacing is much wider than shown on the entrance ramp (right).

So I danced until 4:00 a.m. (others joined in after my initial exhibition), got up the next morning at the crack of 9:00 a.m. (quite scandalous that I could sleep that late), collected my data and headed back for “the hammock.” On the way we met a community member returning home – barefoot. My self-pity about not bringing my boots vanished and after hearing all the time record breaking trips and the story of carrying the clinic through the jungle, I hardly complained at all – very strong those Zapatistas.



The clinic that was carried over the river and through the woods in Emiliano Zapata, Chiapas.



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LAST, BUT NOT LEAST...

Robert K. Patrick: Outstanding Undergraduate in Liberal Arts 2006 - 07

The Outstanding Undergraduate Student in Liberal Arts, Robert K. Patrick, is a Geography major with a minor in International Studies. He has made the Dean's List each semester with a perfect 4.00 GPA. His academic awards from the Department of Geography include the Sally Ann Karnau Scholarship, an Elizabeth Sterry Award, and a Rand McNally Award.

In nominating him for Outstanding Undergraduate, Dr. Bob Larsen wrote "Robert has a high aptitude for grasping complex problems, and a very inquisitive nature...his dedication goes unparalleled" and "he is a genuine renaissance man, a true professional, possessing the utmost sincerity."



Carol Sawyer - Outstanding Graduate Student in Liberal Arts 2006 - 07



The Outstanding Graduate Student in Liberal Arts, Carol Sawyer, is pursuing a Ph.D. degree in Environmental Geography, has a perfect 4.00 GPA and a host of other remarkable academic accomplishments.

Carol has earned three scholarships from the Geography Department, three scholarships from the Liberal Arts College, and four grants, including one from the Geological Society of America to support her dissertation.

Dr. David Butler, her dissertation director, observed, "Carol is operating in the realms of research, grants, and service at a level that would be admirable for an assistant professor."

GRADUATE STUDENT KUDOS



Curtis Recipient of NCGE Award

Geography Education Ph.D. student **Mary Curtis**, of Clear Brook High School in Friendswood, Texas was chosen as a recipient of the National Council for Geographic Education (NCGE) Distinguished Teaching Achievement Award (high school category). Mary will receive her award at the Oct. 18 - 21 NCGE annual meeting in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

AAG Remote Sensing Specialty Group Student Paper Competition Winner

May 2007 GIScience Ph.D. graduate **Junmei Tang** won 2nd place in AAG's Remote Sensing Specialty Group student paper competition. The competition is composed of 15 students selected from an even larger pool. Dr. Tang is a tenure track assistant professor at the University of Maryland Baltimore County.



Sawyer Receives Grant

Carol Sawyer, December 2007 Environmental Geography Ph.D. graduate, was awarded an \$800 Charles Redd Summer Grant for Upper Division and Graduate Students grant from the Charles Redd Center for Western Studies at Brigham Young University. This funding assisted Carol in carrying out fieldwork in Glacier National Park during the summer. Carol will graduate in December, and has assumed a tenure track assistant professor position in the Department of Earth Sciences at the University of South Alabama.