The University of Wisconsin System has made the news recently with disagreements between faculty and upper-level administrators, but what has not changed, and what will never change, is our commitment in Geography to the needs of our students and to further developing them professionally and personally. Unfortunately, we have been unable to escape budget cuts, and it is with great sadness we announce that our GIS Lab Manager and instructor, Matt Millett, will lose his position here in Geography. Matt is an alumnus of the program, which makes this especially sad. I was informed by the Dean of our college that, due to a misunderstanding or lack of communication from upper-level administrators, the College of Arts and Sciences does not have the funds to continue to support Matt’s position, among other positions in our college. The College of Arts and Sciences will experience great losses in the arts, music, humanities, history, and the social sciences as many dedicated instructors were unceremoniously let go due to financial considerations. Matt’s contributions to students the last few years have been priceless, but unfortunately people have found ways to put a price tag on his contributions.

I have witnessed the countless times Matt was there to help students. I know you join me in wishing Matt the best in the years ahead. We all know he will be a fine ambassador for Geography in his next endeavor. I will miss Matt greatly. He has made coming to work fun, and he was always there to answer my questions about GIS and cartography.

For some good news, we enjoyed an outstanding banquet at Junior’s Bar and Grill in River Falls in April. Close to fifty people were in attendance, and we enjoyed a talk by Nicole Helgeson, class of 2008, as she spoke about her time in Chile. We honored our graduates and their families and visited with old and new friends. We remembered Ruth Hale with fondness as well since it has been about a year since her passing. It was great to talk to Mike Albert and reminisce with many former students. We invite you to join us next year. In addition, many students presented this semester at the Spring Undergraduate Research Scholarly and Creative Activity Day, where we enjoyed fine research projects done by our students in Geography 401.

We have a new program associate since Connie Simpsons retired. Katie Possehl joined us this semester, and we are enjoying her contributions to the program. I wish to thank Charlie, Matt, Matt, Ruth and Katie for their hard work and good cheer this year. It has not been the easiest semester, but working with them has made the days enjoyable.

I will be finishing my second, full term as chair, and the baton will be passed to Charlie Rader as he returns to the chair position. I am looking to getting back to teaching full-time and having more time for my courses and research.

Finally, we ask that you please communicate with your neighbors, friends, colleagues, and alumni on the importance Geography has in your life and in your career. I would recommend that a letter, email or phone call to the Chancellor and other people who work with alumni relations are among the ways to help us in Geography. I know that many of you are contacted and solicited for contributions to UWRF, and we ask that you specify that your continued and future support for UWRF is contingent upon support for Geography at UWRF.
CONGRATULATIONS
Spring Graduates!

Kyle Glowa— Gamma Theta Upsilon
David Bergs— Gamma Theta Upsilon
Trent Gundrum— SGO Secretary

2016 GEOGRAPHY AWARD WINNERS

Student Leadership
Outstanding Graduating Senior
Academic Excellence
Outstanding Cartographer
Map of the Year
Geography Scholarship

Diego Valadares
Jason Blatz
David Bergs
Kyle Glowa
Kyle Glowa
Kalley Swift

MAP OF THE YEAR

New Zealand Reference Map, Kyle Glowa

2016 GIS CERTIFICATE RECIPIENTS

Joseph Stumph
Paulo Figueiredo

2016 DONATIONS

Your donations to the department support both the Geography Scholarship and the Scott Nelson Fund. These provide us with the means to provide partial financial support for one student each year and a variety of other things such as awards for graduating seniors and the map of the year contest. Please consider donating to one of these funds. Thank you to those who have made donations.

Geography Scholarship Fund Donors:
Charlie and Nancy Rader
Katie Gannett
Mike Albert
Dan and Jackie Holub
Mike Voss
Larry Kuester
Ron Swanson

Scott Nelson Fund Donors:
Mark Gross and Jeri Goodspeed-Gross
Raytheon Company

Geography Department Fund Donors:
Richard and Neva Sprung
Wells Fargo

If you wish to make a gift, you may follow this link:
https://www.uwrf.edu/Give/Waystogive/Index.cfm

Your contributions in support of Geography are greatly appreciated!
FACULTY NEWS

John Heppen taught Latin America, Economic Geography, and Quantitative Techniques for Geographers and Cartographers this semester. He attended the Association of American Geographers annual meeting in San Francisco and presented “Spatial Analysis of the Socialist Vote for President in the United States 1900-1948” and served on a panel discussion “The Upcoming US Elections: Reflections and Predictions from a Geographical Point of View”. He will be stepping down as chair and he looks forward to fewer meetings. He will be one of the co-editors of the Atlas of the 2016 Elections published by Rowman & Littlefield after serving as a contributor the previous two atlases so he looks forward to a newsworthy and geographically based 2016 election season.

Charlie Rader – taught human geography, geoprocessing techniques, GIS: modeling and analysis, and senior colloquium this semester and it was quite a bit of juggling. He served on Academic Programs and Priorities Committee and continued to work on several maps for a book on the social history of the canoe. He and Brett Kallusky in the art department continue to develop a course on place and photography. This summer he will travel to Scotland to photograph in the Outer Hebrides and has a few escapes to the BWCA planned along with some house projects. In July, he takes on department chair for the last time. Nancy and Gromit are well.

Matt Dooley has had a fun semester teaching and working on various research and art projects. In March, he presented a poster at the AAG meetings in San Francisco with student David Bergs. The poster highlighted recent hardness zone maps that Dooley made in collaboration with the Arbor Day Foundation last summer (see poster at: http://www.mapdooley.com/hardiness-zone-poster) Matt finished a collaborative gunpowder mapping piece that was made in October 2015, as part of the NACIS Gunpowder Mapping Workshop. The piece was recently in an exhibit in Corvallis, Oregon (http://www.thegoundryhq.com/blogs/news/96833606-foundry-annex-events) and will be shown in several other venues this year, including the next NACIS meeting in Colorado Springs.

Ruth Baker has had an excellent Spring semester. She continued to teach her usual physical geography courses, Physical Environment (Geog 110) and World Patterns of Plants and Animals (Geog 214), and also taught a Special Topics course in Natural Disasters, which is one of her passions. Ruth also attended the Sustainability Revitalization Workshop in January, to update her new Global Water Resources course for the proposed Sustainability curriculum. At home, Ruth and Jeremiah perpetually attempt to keep up with, and clean up after, their rambunctious 1 year old daughter and 3 year old puppy!

Matt Millett This spring, Matt has been busy managing the GIS Lab, teaching a section of GIS Theory and Methods, serving on Faculty Senate, and advising students in the GISci Certificate program and the Student Geography Organization (SGO)

ALUMNI NEWS

Thanks to those of you who have updated us through the Alumni link in the past. For those of you who have not, we invite you to do so. We’d love to hear from you! http://www.uwrf.edu/GEOG/Alumni.cfm

Angela Hauge (2007) just changed jobs from a water operator to the GIS/Mapping Technician at Elk River Municipal Utilities at the start of 2016.

Jacquelyn (Ryan) Klein (1993) has been working as a Senior Labor Compliance Investigator for MNDot for the past 2 1/2 years. It keeps her very busy and engaged in the Construction Industry.

Ronald Swanson (1981) plans to retire in August of 2017 after 23 years with Jostens. He continues to design coat-of-arms and other art products for their non-jewelry division. Despite losing his 95-year-old father this year, Ron stays active with his father’s WWII Navy group as their historian and newsletter editor. Ron has also been editor for the Swedish Genealogical Soc. of MN for 20 years and hopes to increase his role after retirement, which will also allow him to be a true geographer again with many travels planned.

Micky Sigrist (1979) is “just an old alumni” who rarely misses a Geography banquet, but found himself in Wales, UK this year, walking the Welsch coast-line during a three week stay!
Don Petzold is doing well, enjoying springtime and doing lots of yard work. He and Liny took another trip to Iceland last August, this one sponsored by the Art Institute of Chicago. While in Reykjavik, they had a reunion with the retired chief meteorologist of Iceland with whom Don did research in the 1970s. Iceland still fascinates as it did 15 years ago during their first visit. They made the usual trips to the East Coast and Montreal, along with several to Chicago and Milwaukee to visit Helena and the twins. Liny will retire at the end of this school year, but hopes to continue an association with the French immersion schools in St. Paul. To celebrate her retirement, they plan a trip to Spain and France this summer.

Michael Albert reports all is well and really doesn’t have much news, other than he enjoyed his trip to the U.S. Virgin Islands this past January with geographer friends, Jack Flynn (former faculty) and Deb Pile.

**BOOKS OF NOTE**

*The Invention of Nature: Alexander von Humboldt’s New World* by Andrea Wulf (2015) is a wonderfully researched biography of one of modern geography’s founders. It covers the development of the understanding of humans and nature and provides a context for current issues of global climate change.

*Connemara: Listening to the Wind* by Tim Robinson (2007) is the first book in his trilogy of the landscape north of Galway, Ireland. Robinson is a cartographer and writer who has studied the landscapes of western Ireland extensively in order to create deep maps of place.

**GIScience MAJOR**

In April, the Geography Department proposed a new, Bachelor of Science degree in Geographic Information Science, with the intent to develop graduates with expertise in GIS that are able to work with advanced database applications, analysis, and visualization of geospatial data. The skills associated with a degree in Geographic Information Science are immediately marketable and meet a demand that is increasing nationally, will remain steady regionally, and align with the UW System’s mission to prepare students for the workforce with skills in STEM fields. The program would include courses offered by Computer Science, Art and Plant and Earth Science departments.

**SGO NEWS**

SGO has been very busy this year. We lost a few members to graduation, but were able to gain many more with good attendance at our weekly meetings. In the fall, there was a full schedule for Geography Awareness week with a speaker from ESRI. Also, we attended a Twins game and took a trip to Crystal Cave in Spring Valley. Many of us traveled to the Twin Cities for the North American Cartographic Information Society (NACIS) conference in October. During the conference, Dr. Mathew Dooley led a very successful Gunpowder Workshop on campus. Throughout the year we had multiple bake sales, including the most successful bake sale in the history of SGO. In the spring we celebrated the year with our annual banquet. We would like to thank our guest speaker Nicole Helgeson and David Bergs for his student presentation. At the end of the semester, we held a Spring Picnic with the other clubs of the Third Floor of Kleinpell Fine Arts Building.

Looking to the future, we will be reaching out to other disciplines on campus. There are a lot of GIS minors in our club who are not Geography majors. It would be good to reach out to other majors where GIS is important, such as Geology, Field Biology, and Conservation. We hope to coordinate activities with the associated clubs and gain new members.

Thank you for your support of the Department of Geography and Geographic Information Science and for helping us promote the remarkable discipline that is Geography.

President, Alexander Meincke
Vice-President, Rachel Potter

First Annual Leadership Gala, May 2016
Alex Meincke and Rachel Potter
Alumni - Please send us your news! We would love to hear from you! [Link](http://www.uwrf.edu/GEOG/Alumni.cfm)

### Alumni Update

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