Notes from the Chair

I don’t think I’ve experienced a semester quite like this at UWRF. From political machinations in Madison and River Falls to budget cuts and program reviews it has been a semester that at times has gone from frightening to maddening with some outcrops of joy. Many of you have been following the politics of the budget in Madison and yes it does have an impact on what we do here in geography. What the long-term results will be is anyone’s guess, but we do know that in the short-term we won’t be able to offer as many geography classes this coming fall as we have in the past and we are still understaffed as we have not been able to replace Don’s position yet. We do have some good news. The GIS lab will be expanded and beginning in the Fall we will have 22 seats in the lab and we have been offering three sections of Geography 250 Introduction to GIS three times a semester and we’re going to offer a summer section of Geography 250. Our students have been working on great GIS and mapping projects for internships. We have people expressing interest and signing up for the GIS certificate and there continues to be a hunger on campus for GIS and the things we can do in geography. Patrick Okan and Cliff Johnson have been working with Ian in creating an interactive campus map that we hope to have online soon. Zachary Bodenner is working on a project with Ian devoted to the St. Croix Valley. We remain busy as ever which is good and bad—mostly good. As chair I want to thank Charlie, Matt, Ian, Dave, and Chaina for their hard work and good cheer during these times. I especially want to thank our program assistant Vicki for all of her hard work and putting up with me this semester. I also must give an extra-special shout-out to Ian. Ian will be leaving us this summer for UW-LaCrosse where he will be starting as an Assistant Professor of Geography. We knew when Ian joined us that his talents and skills would lead to bigger and better things and that day has arrived. We will miss him dearly. As the GIS lab manager he brought a lot of good ideas and boundless energy and his friendship—which is what we will miss the most. We wish him, Birgit and Svenja all the best in LaCrosse. UWRF alumnus Matthew Renault (Millet) will join us as our new GIS Lab manager. After graduating from UWRF he went to the University of Oregon and earned his Master’s. We look forward to his talents and contributions. Finally, I ask you to consider a gift to the geography scholarship, geography fund, or Scott Nelson fund. With decreases in state support of higher education your contributions to those funds are crucial in allowing us to continue to offer a high quality education to our students. If you cannot make a contribution I ask for your word of mouth in spreading the good work we do here in Geography at UWRF.

John
Congratulations Spring Graduates!

Scott Adolphson  Ryan Fosburgh  Lucas Gaudette  David McCollister

Donations to the department go to 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:
Cheryl Arcand  Matt Dooley
Shelby Dupre  John Heppen
Joyce Knowlton  Charlie & Nancy Rader
Michael Voss

Geography Fund:
Ann Legreid  Jack & Rebecca Rasmussen
John Weigel

Scott Nelson Fund:
Jeri Goodspeed-Gross  Caroline Nelson
Patrick Okan  Gregg Roemhildt
Joseph Russella  Ron Swanson
Mike Voss

SGO Spring Semester

SGO has had a busy semester of activities: a fall day trip to Como Zoo and Conservatory and Ian's house for dinner and visiting the King Tut exhibit at the Science Museum of Minnesota with the History club followed by another successful banquet and the KFA 3rd floor end of the year picnic with the SACJ club, History club, and PoliSci club. SGO will end the semester with a three-day spring trip hiking on the north shore and hopefully going on some tours or seeing some geographical sights.

SGO Banquet

The SGO banquet was held on April 30 at the University Center. Over forty guests enjoyed a dinner of roast beef or walleye. Our guest speaker was alumnus Sally Wakefield who is director of Envision Minnesota, formally known as 1000 Friends of Minnesota. We handed out students awards, recognized graduates, and awarded Ron Swanson with our distinguished alumnus award. We will have next year's banquet in April of 2012. Please watch for it!

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Department Awards

Award of Excellence
(for outstanding academic achievement)
Scott Adolphson

Student Leadership Award
(for outstanding service to SGO and the dept.)
Zach Bodenner

Outstanding Graduating Senior Award
(for contributions to the department)
Brett Sergenian

Map of the Year – Best Print Map
Marcus Mussey

Map of the Year – Best Dynamic Map
Zach Bodenner

Map of the Year – Honorable Mention - Dynamic Map
Cliff Johnson
Alumnus Award

This is a new award to be given in recognition of an alumna/alumnus who has supported the department and/or distinguished themselves in their career. This award will be given to an alumna/alumnus who has maintained contact with and has supported the department over the years and/or has distinguished themselves in their chosen career and/or through a process of life-long learning.

Ron Swanson (1981)
Ron holds the distinction of being a founding member of the Student Geography Organization and served as the first president of the group. Ron graduated in 1981 with double majors in Geography and History. Ron worked for the State of Wyoming for 4 years at several historic sites. He worked in the commercial printing industry in the 1980s and returned to UWRF in 1992 to enhance his skills in cartographic design. Since 1993, he has worked as a graphic artist for Jostens Inc. Over the years, Ron has presented at several SGO banquets on themes dealing with historical geography. Throughout this time he has continued his interest in history and geography. He is past-president for the Swedish Genealogical Society of Minnesota. He currently edits their newsletter and serves as the historian of his father’s WWII Navy reunion group and the editor of their newsletter. In 2004, Ron and his father, Doug, were featured on an episode of History Detectives (season 2 episode 3) tracing the history of LCT-203 “Outer Island” currently in Bayfield, Wisconsin that had seen action in August of 1944 carrying ammunition to Alpha Red beach during Operation Dragoon. Ron is currently working on a book of the exploits of small landing craft sailors during WWII.

Over the years, Ron has been one of the most faithful of our alumni and a best friend of the department over the past three decades. Based on his dedication over time to the department and, in particular the SGO, it is with pleasure that we honor Ron as the first recipient of our award to acknowledge his continued support and his dedication to life-long learning.

Chris Atkinson has accepted a teaching position at the University of North Dakota.

Kert Brown will be working for the Council on Aging of West Florida (www.coawfla.org) as the Santa Rosa County Case Manager.

Brett Sergenian ('10) will be attending graduate school at Western Michigan University.

Sally Wakefield ('97) has been named Executive Director of Envision Minnesota (formerly known as “1000 Friends of Minnesota”).

StUDENT & ALUMNI NEWS

Thanks to those of you who have updated us through the Alumni link on the department web page! For those of you who have not, please do so, we’d love to hear from you. http://www.uwrf.edu/geography/

Scott Adolphson (2011) will be attending graduate school at Central Washington University.

Chris Atkinson has accepted a teaching position at the University of North Dakota.

Kert Brown will be working for the Council on Aging of West Florida (www.coawfla.org) as the Santa Rosa County Case Manager.

Brett Sergenian ('10) will be attending graduate school at Western Michigan University.

Sally Wakefield ('97) has been named Executive Director of Envision Minnesota (formerly known as “1000 Friends of Minnesota”).

Faculty & Staff Notes

Chaïna Bapikee had a very busy and exciting semester! She taught five classes: three section of GEOG110 (Physical Environment: Patterns and Systems), one section of GEOG111 (Laboratory: Physical Environment: Patterns and Systems) and one section of GEOG214 (World Patterns of Plants & Animals). She was particularly excited about preparing and teaching GEOG214 as biogeography is her area of expertise. With such a busy semester teaching, Chaïna barely had time for research and is really looking forward to the summer to continue working on her project on climate change effects on northern hardwood forests in the Great Lakes region. She is also looking forward to the summer to finally spend more time in the outdoors whether it means being in the woods, doing some kind of outdoor activity, or just sitting on a patio or around a lake to enjoy the warm weather.

Dave Brandt looking forward to the end of the semester as the schedule of teaching GEOG460 and working on his Sustainable Community MS program has been very exhausting. He also worked his 21st season in the Afton Alps Ski Area Race Department, served on the Stillwater Parks Board and began his 17th season as a track coach at Stillwater Area High School. He’s looking forward to spending more time with family this summer and getting back in to cycling condition. No trips to Le Tour planned for this summer, though. Maybe something less intense like kayaking...

Matt Dooley had a busy Spring semester teaching Intro. GIS, Map Design, and the Senior Seminar. This semester Nat Case from Hedberg Maps of Minneapolis gave a guest lecture and led a critique session in Matt’s Map Design class. It was fun for his students to finally have the opportunity to take a swipe at his work! Nat also spoke with several of our majors about career opportunities in the field of cartography.
Matt was unable to attend the AAG conference this year, but still contributed to a co-authored poster presentation with Ian Muehlenhaus about the geography of UFO sightings in the U.S. Ian reports that the maps were a hit! They were invited to submit a related paper to the *Journal of Geography*. They joke that sometimes the most interesting maps are not necessarily traditional ones…

This summer Matt plans to do some traveling, work with several students on independent research projects, and mostly, work on a co-authored textbook with Ian Muehlenhaus intended for undergrad- and grad-level web mapping courses.

**John Heppen** was pretty busy this semester. He taught Human Geography, Geography of Asia and Oceania, and Geography of Poverty in the United States. He ended his second term on Faculty Senate and continues to serve as department chair. He was busy with the seven-year review of the geography program, which he hopes yields positive results from the University. He presented a paper “A Geographic Comparison Between the Elections of 1860 and 2008” at the Association of American Geographers meeting in Seattle, Washington. He enjoyed visiting the Space Needle and eating the good seafood. This summer he asks for you to look for *Atlas of the 2008 Elections* published by Roman & Littlefield. The atlas is scheduled to be released in July and he’s grateful to the editors for asking him to contribute some chapters.

**Ian Muehlenhaus** had a fun semester teaching a First Year Experience Human Geography class, in which he extolled the virtues of geography over every other discipline. He has also been working on some research and prepping himself for the big changes that await him in La Crosse. In many ways he is sad to be leaving this great university and department. He has truly enjoyed working with his colleagues and all of the students. He wants to say thanks to everyone for putting up with his eccentric ways, loud voice, and irrational affinity for Communist propaganda. Ian will miss being a part of the KFA scene.

**Charlie Rader** spent the semester being humbled (yet again) by ArcGIS. The new version kicked his butt. That said it is always a challenge to teach with new software. He taught two GIS courses, two sections of Human Geography, and an overload of Introduction to International Studies. He participated in a faculty development workshop on incorporating sustainability into the curriculum. He has been overseeing a project producing both and interactive and print map of public recreation working for the Kinnickinnic River Land Trust with students Jared Haas, Rick Schmolke, and Kinnickinnic River Land Trust intern Erica Rader (his niece who has a geography degree from Keene State). Other than that, he’s preparing for summer house projects, teaching a section of Introduction to Cartography and GIS, and of course canoeing. Nancy and Velcro are well.

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**Recommended Reading:**

**Hamish’s Mountain Walk** – Hamish Brown (1978 and 2010)

Recently republished in a new addition Hamish Brown write about the first complete traverse of Munros (Scottish mountains 3,000 feet and above) in one season. He walked 1,639 miles and scaled 289 peaks. Not only does he have beautiful descriptions of the land but insightful comments on the history and the impact that people have had on the land.

**New Europe** - Michael Palin (2007) Traces the veteran of Monty Python on his trip through Eastern Europe over the course of 123 days. Palin has funny and insightful comments about the somewhat uneasy integration of the former Soviet Countries back into the European fold.


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**Web Sites of Interest**

OK, so what did Charlie really do last semester? If you want check out his photo blog of images from Scotland. Slainte Mhath!

[http://thedalkeithportfolio.blogspot.com/](http://thedalkeithportfolio.blogspot.com/)

Crumpled city maps – you don’t need to learn how to fold no stinking map anymore. Introducing crumpled city maps printed on Tyvec and designed by Emanuele Pizzolorusso.


360 Cities – panoramic images of cities – sample of Mont Saint Michel in France. This is a scary cool website that features interactive 360 degree panoramic images of places on earth...they border on spherical views.

[http://www.360cities.net/map#lat=38.90119&lng=9.72664&name=mont-saint-michel-france&zoom=5](http://www.360cities.net/map#lat=38.90119&lng=9.72664&name=mont-saint-michel-france&zoom=5)

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**ATTENTION Newsletter Recipients!**

If you would prefer to receive an electronic version of the newsletter rather than the ‘hard copy’ you receive in the mail, please email geography@uwrf.edu.

For **Geography Awareness Week 2011** we want to make a big impact on campus! Think of speakers or events that we could have to increase geographic awareness on campus. Please email any ideas to Matt Dooley at mathew.dooley@uwrf.edu.