Notes from the Chair

Once again the semester draws to a close and we look forward to the ending of the school year and a summer of scholarship and relaxation, but in June the process begins again with Freshman Registration. The big news this spring includes the successful hiring of Ruth Baker to be our newest Assistant Professor of Geography. She will continue our tradition in physical geography and we look forward to her contributions and new ideas and energies. She is finishing her Ph.D. in Geography at the University of Minnesota. Her dissertation is on snowfall so she’ll fit in perfectly here unless climate change really messes things up. Big news on campus includes the beginning of the University’s new strategic plan: Pathway to Distinction 2012-2017. There are three main goals of the plan: Distinctive Academic Excellence, Global Education and Engagement, and, Innovation and Partnerships. Charlie Rader and Geography are supporting an initiative to reconstitute the Master’s Program in Sustainable Community Development as a university-wide, multidisciplinary program with contributions from faculty in all colleges. Other academic news includes the inching forward of a proposed Bachelors of Applied Science in GIS. This program will bring students from the technical schools into geography and into the University. They will graduate with a four-year degree meeting all university and college requirements with a bachelors in GIS! This is still a little ways away, but we look forward to its implantation in the next year or two. In other news Nat Case from Hedberg Maps visited our program to help us prepare students for the workforce. Speaking of the workforce we are starting to hear some good news about our recent graduates finding work in the GIS field. We had a chance to talk to our alumni at the banquet and the economy does seem to be picking up as there are also more internships being offered to students as well. Joe Russella and Gregg Roemhildt presented at the Midwestern Undergraduate Geography Symposium at St. Thomas in April and eight of our students displayed their work at the RSCA day on campus on April 19. I wish to thank Charlie, Matt, Matt, Chaina and Dave for their efforts this spring and we wish Chaina the best of luck as she works to finish her dissertation and teaching in the area. Finally, I must note that our program assistant Vicki Sillman is leaving us this summer. She has been the program assistant for us for 13 years and her contributions and good cheer will be missed. The place won’t be the same without her and she has meant so much to us in helping us support what we do. She has been a big part of the program in so many ways. We wish her, Kyli, Kaelyn, Kelsey, and Wayne the best of luck.
CONGRATULATIONS
SPRING GRADUATES!

Micah Bowe       Joe Russella
Tyler Perrenoud  Jenna Walz

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Congratulations!
GammaThetaUpsilon Initiates

Shelby Dupre      Zachary Rossow
Lindsay Fox       Nathan Schilling
Gregg Roemhildt  Brie Simon

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Student Awards presented at this year's
SGO Banquet

Student Leadership Award – Micah Bowe

Outstanding Graduating Senior – Zach Bodenner

Award for Academic Excellence – Jenna Walz

Outstanding Cartographer – Zach Bodenner

Map of the Year: Static – Haily Henderson

Map of the Year: Dynamic, 1st Place – Joe Russella

Map of the Year: Dynamic, 2nd Place – Andrea Strauch

STUDENT, ALUMNI & FRIENDS of
GEOGRAPHY

MARK HUONDER ('10) has been deployed to Kuwait for a 3-month tour of duty with the Minnesota Air Force Guard.

IAN MUEHLENHAUS is looking forward to summer after his first year of tenure track employment at UW Lacrosse. (He had no idea how stressful and exhausting it could be!) He is looking forward to being in exile in Milwaukee for a month this summer and welcoming a second daughter in early July. He wishes his former students who are graduating the best in their future endeavors!

SEAN RALEIGH ('08) has just returned from a 6-month tour of duty with the MN National Guard in Kuwait where he and his unit provided support for troops exiting Iraq.

Thanks to those of you who have updated us through the Alumni link in the past. For those of you who have not, please do so, we'd love to hear from you! http://www.uwrf.edu/geog/ or email geography@uwrf.edu

DONATIONS

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:
Justin March
Ron Timmerman
Michael Voss

Geography Fund:
John Weigel

Scott Nelson Fund:
Bradley Bittorf
John Heppen

FACULTY & STAFF
NOTES

Dave Brandt continues to work on the coordination of GIS activities at Washington County. While challenging, it's fun to see the improvement in business process as more people than ever rely on the technology. He also enjoyed teaching GEOG460 once again and has been impressed by the knowledge and experience students are bringing to class. This year, he is gearing up for a 230 mile single-track mountain bike adventure at the end of the summer from Durango, CO to Moab, UT. He claims he’s more
of a roadie, so is adjusting to a very different type of riding (he’s never crashed into a tree on road rides). The key, as always, will be balancing family time with all his other activities.

**Matt Dooley** has been busy teaching and working on various research projects this semester. In February, he presented a paper at the AAG, and is currently working on a long-term project focused on crime mapping.

**John Heppen** had a busy spring. In February he went to New York for the annual meeting of AAG. He enjoyed the sights and sounds of Manhattan and enjoyed walking around Times Square and Broadway. It was a fun trip where he presented “Presidential Election Regionalism in the United States 2000-2012”, took part of a panel with other political geographers. It was titled “The Political Landscape of the 2012 U.S. Presidential Election” and finally in New York he was secondary author on a paper presented by his friend David Beard from UM-Duluth. It was a paper on using graphic novels as supplemental reading in geography courses, “Comics and Geography: Critical Approach, Pedagogical Application”. They hope to have that turned into an article somewhere. In January his long-awaited book chapter with David Beard, “The Dynamics of Identity in the Communities of Local Professional Wrestling” appeared in Sports Fans, Identity, and Socialization Exploring the Fandemonium published by Lexington Books. If you’re interested in the dynamics of sports fandom read this book. Teaching-wise he taught Geography of Latin America, the Senior Collegium, and two sections of Geography 120. Additionally, he served as acting program director of International Studies in addition to chairing Geography and was crazy enough to get elected to faculty senate again. He is also still going to comic book and wrestling shows and playing with model trains.

**Charlie Rader** spent the first part of spring teaching compressed courses on-campus and the last part teaching Urban Geography for the International Traveling Classroom program. He joined the group in Italy and Austria, where he was able to have the students visit some wonderful cities, including Verona, Florence, Venice, Vienna, and Bratislava. In addition, he made a pilgrimage to the Museum of Globes in Vienna. Nancy traveled over and they have spent a couple of weeks traveling to visit some other places for course development for Europe and Human Geography. Both are looking forward to a quiet summer of house projects, gardening, and canoeing.

Over the spring semester, **Matt Renault** taught another round of Intro to Geographic Information Science, critiqued students’ senior colloquium projects, and worked with the Student Geographers Organization on a mapping project for the Kinnickinnic River Land Trust. Over the summer, he’ll teach Human Geography online, update and add software to the GIS Lab, and work on repurposing the lab’s storage room for student use.

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**EMERITUS FACULTY**

**Mike Albert** is alive and well and picking morel mushrooms.

**Don Petzold** had an interesting spring. He and Liny spent an unforgettable 9-day vacation in Doha, Qatar in the Middle East, visiting Mark Tinkler (former SGO president, ’88-’90) and family. They visited remote desert regions overlooking the Kingdom of Bahrain, singing barchan dunes, traditional markets in the Souq, and ate several memorable meals. Coming up soon is a trip to Seattle and Vancouver, British Columbia and the usual trip to the cabin in Massachusetts.

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**SGO NEWS**

SGO had a busy spring. Bake Sales and the Spring Banquet were the usual spring highlights. SGO engaged in a service learning project helping to map parcels for the Kinnickinnic River Land Trust. SGO hopes to do something fun this spring or summer.

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