FROM THE DEPARTMENT HEAD

It is a great day to be a geographer at K-State! I feel so privileged to have joined the K-State Geography family, starting my position in July 2005 as Professor and Head. I want you to know that our department employs award-winning classroom instructors, world-class researchers, as well as an efficient and friendly staff. We attract talented and motivated students from around the country and beyond our nation’s borders. Our faculty members are conducting exciting research in Kansas, the Great Plains-Rocky Mountain region, and in international arenas: England, Germany, the Himalayas, Bangladesh, Mexico, Paraguay, Senegal. We enjoy an excellent reputation on and off campus for our productivity, number and quality of students, and our willingness to work with other programs. Whatever progress that has occurred in my first half-year as department head is due in large part to the guidance of John Harrington, Head for the previous 5.5 years, as well as the support of the faculty, staff and students in Geography.

2005 has been another banner year for Geography at K-State. Our department expanded to 11 full-time faculty. We are currently conducting one faculty search and participating in another interdisciplinary search who could be housed in Geography, so our faculty may grow to 13 full-time members by Fall 2006. Moreover, we are slated to conduct a search in 2006-07 for another professor. These new faculty will allow us to better serve our undergraduate and graduate student programs and bring the size of our department in-line with what is considered adequate for a doctoral program in Geography. In tight budget times, this expansion was only made possible because of the extraordinary scholarship of our faculty and the successes of our students and alumni.

We are working with longtime K-State geographers Steve White, Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, and University Provost Duane Nellis to align our department mission with those of the college and university. We are preparing for the future through strategic planning, striving to contribute to the university goal of ranking among the top 10 land grant institutions. KSU Geography is well-positioned to participate in university-wide initiatives in geospatial technology, food safety and security, and global research on water-based economies.

Like most universities in our country, increasing emphasis is being placed on measurable performance of academic units: credit-hour production, number of degrees awarded, grants, student learning assessment, etc. Geography ranks very high in the college using these criteria. Geography is home to 37 graduate students, 15 of whom are pursuing the Ph.D. degree. We have 63 undergraduate students majoring in Geography plus 19 students pursuing the minor. Over 4200 KSU students enrolled in Geography courses in 2005. Remarkably, about one of every 10 KSU students enroll in GEOG 100 (World Regional Geography) each year, a direct reflection on the highly-praised teaching by Drs. Jeff Smith, Kevin Blake, Max Lu, Karen De Bres, Visiting
Assistant Professor Laura Moley, and graduate student instructors. In 2005 Geography graduated three Ph.D. students, seven M.A. students, and 11 B.A. students. In Fall 2005, Dr. De Bres taught her courses on the Geography of Tourism and Geography of Europe through the KSU Semester in London Program.

Emeriti faculty Drs. David Kromm, Steve Stover, Huber Self and Chuck Bussing are working together to update the document originally authored by Huber on the history of geography at K-State. It should be ready sometime in 2006.

Geography faculty continue to be very successful in research…obtaining funding support, employing students in research projects, presenting papers and posters at national and regional meetings, and publishing in high-quality forums. Drs. Shawn Hutchinson, John Harrington and Doug Goodin have been especially successful garnering competitive grants for research, often collaborating with other faculty on campus. Our faculty members have also received attention from the print and broadcast media regarding their research and current affairs. Drs. Lisa Harrington, Bimal Paul and KSU journalism professor Joyce Gordon received a NSF grant to conduct face-to-face interviews with residents in SE Louisiana to understand why they did or didn’t follow mandatory orders to evacuate during Hurricane Katrina. Shortly after the devastating earthquake in Pakistan, Voice of America Radio interviewed Dr. Paul live from his KSU office about the potential for earthquakes in Bangladesh. He also served as the Geography Expert for National Geographic Society’s EdNet, an online question-answer forum for K-12 teachers and students nationwide. This is just a sample; please take a look at the department’s web site (www.ksu.edu/geography) and click on “News” for links to these multiple news releases.

Geography faculty members are being elected to national office in the Association of American Geographers (AAG) and winning awards and fellowships. Dr. Kevin Blake began his term as AAG Councilor for the Great Plains-Rocky Mountain Region. Our Geographic Information Systems and Spatial Analysis Lab (GISSAL) celebrated its 15-year anniversary in November. In July 2005, GISSAL received a Special Achievement Award from the Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) for excellence in GIS technology. A new scholarship is being established honoring Emeritus Professor Sy Seyler who started the geospatial program in our department.

The K-State (Beta Psi) chapter of Gamma Theta Upsilon (GTU), the international honor society in geography, has been very active. (See the exciting news about our chapter later in this newsletter.) They have sponsored several outstanding brown-bag seminars, participated in the state Adopt-a-Highway program, helped sponsor visiting scholars and our spring banquet, and raised funds for Hurricane Katrina victims. In another outreach activity, Dr. Hutchinson and GISSAL students conducted two workshops for the GROW (Girls Researching Our World) Project, guided instruction for fifth and sixth grade girls in how to use GPS and GIS to solve real-world problems.

I am working hard to create a “culture of possibility”…a sense that if the department as whole succeeds, all faculty and students benefit. We enjoy a reputation as a student-friendly department…a “family” as described by Jason Sheeley, a K-State alum and geospatial data analyst for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Kansas City, who was our keynote speaker during Geography Awareness Week. We are always looking for ways to strengthen the teaching and learning environment. I would like to do more to support student participation in
regional and national professional meetings. We depend in large measure on donations to support student scholarships and professional development of students. Your support has made a huge difference and is needed now more than ever.

KSU President Jon Wefald helped the Geography program this year by refurbishing the 164 corridor in Seaton Hall...new carpet, paint, and ceiling panels. Dean White directed funds to replace the floor and carpet in the department office and three adjacent faculty offices. Seaton 305-306 are being remodeled to house the GIS Commons.

I uprooted my family and moved to Manhattan because K-State Geography is strong and likely to move forward in the near future. Most of us want to be part of something bigger than ourselves. We want to work in a position where we have an opportunity to thrive and make a difference in the world. Based on the news from our alumni, we are confident that your K-State experience has placed you in a position to succeed. Our graduates are gainfully employed in business, industry, government, and academia. Please continue to send us reports of your achievements; we are proud of our alumni! Take satisfaction in what you and your fellow alumni have accomplished. Our biggest asset is our shared passion for geography. We are standing on your shoulders!

Thanks for all you do for K-State Geography!

**FACULTY NEWS**

**Kevin Blake:** I’m in my fifth year on the geography faculty at K-State. Diana and I have averaged a move about every four years over the past twenty years, and this year we again decided to make a move. Unlike some of our long-distance moves, this time we’re moving locally into a new house with a fine view of the Kaw Valley landscape. Proposed commercial development adjacent to the backyard of our old house spurred the decision to re-locate, and we hope to be settled in by the start of next semester. In other news, this fall I attended my first AAG council meeting as the regional councillor for the Great Plains – Rocky Mountain division of the AAG. It was a pleasure to experience how such a diverse group of people shares the common goal of creating a stronger discipline for all types of geographers. Several trips to Colorado formed the majority of my other travels during the year, along with a trip to see lighthouses on the Gulf Coast of Mississippi and Alabama in May.

**Karen DeBres:** Hello to all of our alums from Karen. You have probably noticed what a well-traveled bunch the geography faculty were this year. I was fortunate enough to be chosen to take a group of K-State undergraduates to London for the fall semester. Imagine teaching “Geography of Europe” and “Geography of Tourism” in London (and in Stratford and Brighton and Oxford and Windsor). Naturally, I managed to tour up and down the main shopping streets of Regent Street and Oxford Street as well. At least part of that time, I was busily taking notes on all the American based fast food restaurants there. Starbucks will soon have more restaurants in London than McDonalds! There are already more Starbucks in London than in New York City.

My little flat was just two blocks down from the British Museum so that every day I walked right by, and stopped to admire it, and to smile at all of the tourists. We all became experts at giving directions to overseas visitors.
Chuck’s wife Sabine came by, as did my mother, who waited out one of the season’s hurricanes taking place back in Florida.

During the spring semester, by contrast, I was busy working on the 150th birthday celebration in Manhattan. If you visit our local historical society website, you will find two small works of mine, “Heirloom Recipes and Recollections from Our Common Past,” a little cookbook based on all the local old church and club cookbooks with stories about food from some former residents, and “The Manhattan Women’s Heritage Trail Guide.”

I am president of my neighborhood homeowner’s association this year. We are about to embark on an attempt to secure a small national trust district for ourselves. For those of you who graduated in the 1990s, I don’t live in the ranch house by the doctors’ offices any more, but I’m near Sunset Cemetery and the old water tower.

As usual, the department is growing. I was happy to host the Christmas party this year, with for example, Huber Self who has been here for half a century and our newest arrivals, Dick and Linda Marston.

Doug Goodin: It’s hard to believe that 2005 is almost “in the books.” It’s been an interesting year, marked by some exciting new projects as well as the continuation of existing work. My main research efforts continue to be focused on the effects of deforestation and land cover change on hantavirus occurrence in Paraguay. I spent parts of June and July in Paraguay, conducting field research at our study sites in Canindeyu and also teaching a minicourse/workshop in remote sensing techniques for the Paraguayan geosciences community. I returned to South America in September for a quick trip to visit researchers in Argentina and Brazil, with an eye toward expanding the project to include the entire Southern Cone. Closer to home, I learned in the spring that I received funding for an exciting new project to build small unmanned aerial vehicles for use as remote sensing platforms. This work is gearing up, and my colleagues and I hope to have a flying prototype within two years. I also continue to work at the Konza Prairie, most recently on the effects of grazing and fire on the spatial distribution of nutrients in grasses.

John Harrington: Good things have happened since I last wrote a short piece for the Alumni Newsletter. I’m now a “recovering administrator” and Dean White congratulated me on my transition to the “best job” in a University. Soon after turning the headship over to Dick Marston, I was in my doctor’s office for some reason I can’t recall. What I do remember is that my blood pressure was way down. Since then, I’ve enjoyed letting other department heads know what they can do to improve their personal health.

This “full” Professor began the new phase of his career with a new course preparation: a 400-level class on Human Dimensions of Global Change. I worked hard to develop a social science discussion class that both documents that state of our planet and identifies positive steps that we all can work on to make improvements. The small 2004 paperback, Red Sky at Morning, by Gus Speth provides a nice overview of why E. O. Wilson has referred to the next few decades as “the bottleneck” and also gives some realistic suggestions for action during the near future. As someone who got into geography in part due to an interest in the results of our interaction with the environment, I am happy to have added Human Dimensions of Global Change to the list of classes I’ll be teaching.

The pace of my life continues to be quite rapid with lots of opportunities to “keep me off the streets.” During the period from February through November, I gave a professional presentation in every month. Yea, I was a slacker in January and December! Two trips to Senegal in West Africa (in February and July) were a nice bonus for being professionally active. It is always good to get a chance to see and learn a bit about other places on this planet. Highlights of the past 12 months
include a wonderful weekend hiking in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest (near Mt Adams) in July and “beach time” with my sons near Astoria, OR.

**Lisa Harrington:** The past year has been yet another chapter in keeping busy. I guess there are just a few notable occurrences I want to report. Most notable, I was promoted to full professor (woohoo!). I’ve also been a co-PI on two successful proposals to NSF—one a doctoral dissertation research improvement grant for Mary Dobbs’ Ph.D. research on local economic importance of the Conservation Reserve Program, and the other with Bimal Paul and Joye Gordon (Journalism & Mass Communication) on evacuation response to Hurricane Katrina. I have rather unwisely agreed to take over administration of NASA Space Grant activities for KSU, and have yet to fully comprehend what I’ve gotten myself into there. I also did 3 ESRI training classes, but have yet to go back and review what I “learned” and hope to apply. I went nowhere exotic, unless the Pacific Northwest or the District of Columbia count. John and I had papers to present at the annual Applied Geography Conference in Washington (the DC side of the country) this fall, and decided to drag our reluctant boys there to see some of the nation’s capital. It was a really good trip, although we had homework catch-up battles afterwards. Well, and if post-Katrina New Orleans counts as exotic, I was down in those parts for a week, along with others (hopefully a couple of them report elsewhere in this publication).

Ah, my last ‘big’ bits of news: Seamus (the Shetland sheepdog) and I earned his Novice Agility (NA) and Novice Jumpers with Weaves (NAJ) titles in 2005. I just hope we find some time to train and compete at the next level. In addition, I managed to add one more canine to our household menagerie, to bring us to a total of 3 felids & 2 canids, along with the two young hominid males and adult hominid parents (the fish don’t count). The youngest addition is Smoky Hills Willapa Beowulf (Wolf), a Cavalier King Charles spaniel. In spite of the big name, they’re about the size of a large cat. I hope to work with Wolf on agility, too, or (better yet) get Colin (12) or Ian (14) to do it. Colin might; Ian is an unlikely possibility, as it would mean doing something in front of other people.

**J.M. Shawn Hutchinson:** I’m pleased to report that this past summer, ESRI presented K-State with a 2005 Special Achievement in GIS Award (SAG) at a special ceremony during the ESRI User Conference in San Diego. The Department of Geography and GISSAL played a significant role in this distinctive honor. We were also able to hold the first ever K-State Alumni Reception at the “UC” and welcomed over 30 alumni and friends to this special event.

Geography continues to be a leader in geographic information systems and science at the university. In November, the department held a series of special, and well-attended, events in celebration of GISSAL’s 15th anniversary (see separate story in this newsletter). Geographers were also key members of the team that prepared the proposal for K-State’s new GIS Commons facility (http://swat.gis.ksu.edu) – a state-of-the-art GIScience research collaboratory. As in 2004, John Harrington and I submitted a successful “GIScience Infrastructure Enhancement - Phase II” proposal for the university’s 2005 Targeted Excellence program. As a direct result of this award, we will be hiring an additional tenure-track GIS faculty member, with an emphasis on social science research and applications.

Speaking of GISSAL, the research tempo in the lab continues to be as busy (arguably chaotic) as ever. Dr. Nancy Leathers, who served as a post-doctoral assistant in the lab for the past couple of years left for greener pastures (and warmer temperatures) and a full-time position with the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) in the Tampa, Florida area. This fall, we welcomed Peg Margosian to GISSAL. Peg is the newest GIS Science Fellow funded by USDA APHIS and will
be collaborating with us on spatial research involving plant pathogens and invasive species. Peg joins Anne Cully from the National Park Service as current visiting scientists in the lab. Graduate student Tom Vought (B.S., James Madison University) has continued research and fieldwork on the SERDP-funded project looking at impacts of military training on water quality. Jason Sweet (B.S., Kansas State University) has made significant progress in partnership with Anne, on mapping the vegetation of Petrified Forest National Park for the National Park Service. GISSAL contributions to the Defense Urban Operation Environmental Laboratory continued this year with a new project examining innovative ways to add mapping capabilities to an aspatial web-based chemical database designed to increase compliance with federal environmental reporting regulations. Amit Kesarwani (M.S., Indiana State University), one of our new doctoral students, is leading this effort. Sonny Oko, displaced from the University of New Orleans by Hurricane Katrina, has taken over for Lori Emerson in database development for funded work examining animal carcass disposal decision support methods in Kansas. Undergraduates Iris Wilson and Clancy Jensen also joined the lab staff during the past year and will be working on several projects, including a project modeling the stewardship potential of private lands for the Kansas Forest Service.

Beginning this year, GISSAL began working with K-State’s Women in Engineering and Science Program (WESP) to conduct classes designed to increase the interest of middle school girls in the sciences and engineering. During the summer of 2004, GISSAL students designed and implemented a GPS navigation course for the “Girls Researching our World” workshop. In December, GISSAL participated in the “Engineers and Scientists to the Rescue” program where GISSAL staff used GIS to instruct girls on tornado climatology and designing an effective early warning siren network.

As I reported in the previous newsletter, research-related travel was an area of emphasis for me last year and included working trips to Paraguay, Canada, and China. That theme continued in February 2004, when I joined Doug Goodin, John Harrington, and geologist Mary Hubbard on a week-long visit to Senegal. The purpose of the trip was to develop relationships with various professionals and agencies across the country in preparation for submitting a proposal to develop a national geospatial atlas/portal for Senegal and, perhaps, all of West Africa. Other journeys took me to Denver for the annual AAG meeting (April) and the ESRI Homeland Security Summit (September), Jackson Hole, Wyoming for the University Consortium for Geographic Information Science (UCGIS) Summer Assembly (June), and Washington, D.C. where I helped organize a session on agricultural biosecurity at the annual Applied Geography Conference. Some of my current ag biosecurity research was also presented by a co-investigator at the UCGIS Congressional Breakfast held in Washington, D.C. in February.

On the teaching front, I instructed students in four classes this past year: GEOG 302 (Cartography & Thematic Mapping), GEOG 508 (GIS I), GEOG 702 (Computer Mapping and GeoVisualization), and GEOG 708 (GIS II). Many of you will be pleased to note that the course we added last year, GEOG 795 (Topics in GIScience), has been very popular among geography and non-geography graduate students alike. I’m also happy to announce that two existing geography courses, GEOG 302 and GEOG 508, have been approved as University General Education courses. The new Undergraduate Certificate in GIS is proving to be a success and five more students, including two geographers, have successfully completed the very popular Graduate Certificate in GIScience.

Max Lu: A fortune cookie I got at a Chinese restaurant some time ago proclaimed, “you are one of the people who ‘goes places in life’.” So far this seems to have been the case (now if only all the other fortunes that said I will be rich also hold true!). Work-related trips continued to take me to new and fascinating places in the past year. For the third time, I took a group of K-State students to China on a tour in May 2005. In addition to the usual stops at mega cities like Beijing, Xian and Shanghai, we ventured to Southwest China’s
Yunnan province and visited Dali and Lijiang, two places resided mainly by some of China’s minority groups (the Bai and Yi people in the former and Naxi in the latter). Somewhat isolated and mysterious, these places looked very different from where the Han people hold sway, particularly the coastal areas. The traditional, densely constructed one or two-story brick buildings are well preserved in old cities, surrounded by, in some cases snow-capped mountains. Friendly locals in colorful costumes greet visitors in both English and their mother tongues. As evening descended, local residents and visitors from around the world hold hands and dance the night away around bonfires in the Old Market Square, to the tunes of folk music. In the nearby “Bar Street,” perhaps better named “Bar Creek” because bars, dozens of them, flank a weeping willow tree-lined shallow creek, with gold fish swimming in it and candle burning paper boats floating downstream. Singing matches often broke out between customers of the bars facing each other to see which group can sing more and better. The singing goes on and on, punctuated only by clapping of hands, cheers and laughter…

Strolling on the peaceful, ancient brick and stone streets in Lijiang and Dali, I often wondered, is this the Shangri-la James Hilton described in his novel Lost Horizon?

I am hoping to lead another tour this year. Feel free to contact me if you are interested.

Richard Marston: 2005 has been an exciting and challenging year for me. On the same day in July I started as Professor and Department Head at K-State, I also started my one-year term as President of the Association of American Geographers (AAG). I co-organized an AAG Healthy Departments Workshop in Freeport, Maine, which was attended by 28 participants and 9 panelists. As AAG President, I attended seven of the nine AAG regional meetings: Middle Atlantic States Division (MAD) in Reston, VA; Great Plains-Rocky Mountains Division in Laramie, WY; New England-St. Lawrence Valley Division (NESTVAL)in Keene, NH; Middle States Division in Chautauqua, NY; West Lakes Division in Iowa City; Southwest Division (SWAAG) in Fayetteville, AR; and Southeast Division (SEDAAG) in West Palm Beach, FL. I also presided over the AAG Executive Committee Meeting in Jackson Hole, WY, and the AAG Fall Council Meeting held in conjunction with SEDAAG. I am working on several AAG Presidential initiatives: advancing physical geography; supporting ongoing efforts to promote healthy departments; promoting collaboration between geographers and with practitioners in other disciplines; highlighting contributions of geographers to public policy; and contributing to AAG fundraising efforts to advance geography. I am contributing the monthly President’s Column for the AAG Newsletter. At the Annual Meeting of the AAG in Chicago, I will be hosting a reception in the Penhouse Suite for K-State faculty, students and alumni....YOU ARE INVITED!

I continue to serve as Co-Editor-in-Chief of the Elsevier journal, Geomorphology. Over 200,000 full-text articles were downloaded from the journal website in 2005 and the "impact factor" of the journal remains ahead of the competitors.

I am finishing one research project, funded by the National Park Service, on the feasibility of restoring the Washita River in western Oklahoma to conditions that existed in 1868 when General George A. Custer 7th Calvary attached Black Kettle and his band of Cheyenne and Arapahoe Indians who were camped along the river. I am part of a team that is nearing completion on two-research project funded by the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation. One project seeks to relate geomorphic, hydrologic and vegetation variables to the abundance of smallmouth bass populations in the mountains of eastern Oklahoma. The second project seeks to relate geomorphic and hydrologic variables to the abundance of endangered freshwater mussels in the Kiamichi River, SE Oklahoma. Finally, I continue to work on a project, sponsored by the National Science Foundation that is examining the rate of uplift and rate of river downcutting in the Garhwal Himalaya of NW India. Preliminary results indicate that both rates may be among the highest ever measured for any mountain region in the world.
My wife, Linda, who has B.A. and M.S. degrees in Geography, is employed at KSU's Hale Library cataloging and cleaning a collection of over 60,000 aerial photos of Kansas. Our son, Bryce, is a sophomore at the University of Wyoming, majoring in Geography (imagine that!). He is spending summers serving as a field research assistant to graduate students engaging in geomorphic surveys of mountain streams. Our daughter, Brooke, is a sophomore at Manhattan High School and an oboist at the high school, in the Topeka Youth Symphony, and in the District Honor Band.

Chuck Martin: The year 2005 was another busy one for the Martin family. I completed my 17th year in the Geography Department at Kansas State University, but unlike Bill Snyder will be sticking around for more! I continue to teach Environmental Geography I and II, Geography of Kansas, the Geography Capstone seminar, and Geographic Research Methods (the old Colloquium II). I also serve as lead undergraduate advisor in the department, which gives me the chance to meet all new majors. Finally, I continue in my role as director of the Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences (NRES) Secondary Major.

Research this year took me back to a topic I looked at more than 20 years ago in graduate school: historical river channel change in the Great Plains. One student has worked along the Cimarron River in southwestern Kansas, another is examining a small basin north of Manhattan. Summers find us (wife Sabine, son Nicholas, and daughter Christine) in Germany visiting my in-laws and continuing research on heavy metal storage in the Lahn River and its tributaries.

As always, travel was an important part of our year. January took us on a visit to family in New Hampshire for five days of skiing near Mt. Washington. In March, the search for the “white stuff” led west to Estes Park, Colorado, and a week of cross-country skiing in Rocky Mountain National Park. In June it was off to Germany for a month-long stay in Giessen. The past summer there featured the extra bonus of attending an international soccer match between Mexico and Argentina, held as part of the Confederations Cup “tune-up” for next summer’s big event, the World Cup in Germany. Along with the other 5 million soccer fans from around the world, I have put in for two of the 250,000 tickets to one of the matches next summer. Our son Nicholas has become quite a good defender on his traveling team in Manhattan, so enjoyed the chance to see some of the world’s elite players at close range. On the way back from Europe, we spent five days in Iceland visiting just a few of the many spectacular sites in the “Land of Fire and Ice.”

Bimal Paul: Last year was one of the most productive years for me. I published three (single-authored) papers in refereed journals, including the Professional Geographer. Another paper in Health and Place will appear any day. A couple of manuscripts are under review and one has been accepted for publication in Progress in Development Studies. I received a Small Grant for Exploratory Research (SGER) from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to study “Factors Associated with Compliance to Katrina Mandatory Hurricane Evacuation Orders in Seven Coastal Louisiana Parishes.” Dr. Lisa Harrington and Dr. Joye Gordon (Journalism) are co-PIs for this research project. I also received a Senior Fellowship from the American Institute of Bangladesh Studies (AIBS) to conduct research on perceived seismic risk and preparedness in Dhaka, Bangladesh for a period of three months. To complete this project, I will visit Bangladesh twice. I went December 11, 2006 and will leave again in the middle of March 2006. In December, my wife Anjali went with me.

Last year I attended five conferences and presented eight papers. I went to Kobe, Japan to attend the 8th International Conference on Asian Urbanization in August 2005. That was my first visit to Japan and I had a great time there. One night Professor
Karan of the University of Kentucky and Professor Dhusa of Drake University went with me to an Indian Restaurant for dinner. The food was tasty, but not expensive. I reviewed one grant proposal and manuscripts for eight journals ranging from Environmental Geochemistry and Health to Journal of Hazardous Materials. Spring 2006 is my sabbatical semester and I intend to complete a book manuscript on arsenic contamination of groundwater in rural Bangladesh.

Last year was also an exceptional year because I was interviewed about the Hurricane Katrina by three newspapers and journal, including one daily newspaper from The Netherlands. The journal Science also interviewed me on the Katrina grant. The National Geographic Society (NGS) invited me to answer Katrina-related questions asked by K-12 geography teachers in its EdNet program. Voice of America (VOA) interviewed me live on October 19. This one-hour long radio broadcast was heard worldwide on Bengali-language VOA stations. I discussed earthquake risk in South Asia and answered questions from students and scholars in many countries.

On the family front, our eldest daughter, Anjana went to Italy for a month during the summer of 2005 through KU Business College’s study abroad program. Our youngest daughter, Archana will pursue an undergraduate degree in Elementary Education at K-State starting fall of 2006. Our son, Rahul is in eighth grade.

Jeff Smith: I hope 2005 was a happy and fruitful year for each of you. I was fortunate and blessed with many unique and interesting opportunities. In August I spent 10 days in Nicaragua. The first couple days I looked at the evolving urban structure in the Granada to Managua corridor. The remaining time I spent examining rural land use patterns and settlement characteristics in an extremely remote village near Esteli. What a fabulous experience! In October, I presented a paper at the Conference of Latin Americanist Geographers meeting in Morelia, Mexico. Morelia is one of the world’s UNESCO sites and a visit to the city reveals why. As part of the conference field trips, I visited Guadalajara (Mexico’s second largest city) and then took an overnight field trip from 3:00 pm to 4:00 am to the Lake Patcuaro region for their annual Day of the Dead celebration. Holy cow, what a sight. It’s hard to explain the sacred majesty of the event. Two weeks later I took a trip to Queretaro, Mexico. Queretaro is another UNESCO site and has an equal number of appealing things to see. So, in a nutshell, this has been a very busy semester and I’m looking forward to staying home in 2006 and writing articles / manuscripts on my findings. As I’ve said in the past, if you find yourself on the K-State campus, please stop by and say hello!

FROM THE DEAN

Steve White: Great things are happening in the Department of Geography. The department gained significant strength and momentum during John Harrington’s six-year tenure as head. In particular, geography’s student credit hour production grew from approximately 10,000 to more than 14,000 student credit hours. Also, the department systematically increased its extra-mural, competitively funded research programs. During the 2004-2005 academic year geography placed 5th among 21 academic departments in the College of Arts and Sciences with respect to total research funding - a total of about $1.2 million dollars. Not bad when you compete with physics, biology, chemistry and biochemistry! John also oversaw the department’s move from Dickens Hall to Seaton Hall. Under John’s leadership, and the dedication of several faculty members, the role and impact of GIS on academic programs at K-State has expanded dramatically. The advent
of the GIS Commons will bring a new GIS coordinator to K-State. The demand for GIS across the university has soared and department will undoubtedly play a pivotal role in cross-disciplinary initiatives that utilize GIS. The funds for this terrific initiative ($550,000) come from the University’s Targeted Excellence Program.

I have no doubt but that the department will continue to excel in the future. This summer, Richard Marston took the reigns as department head from John Harrington. Dick is an internationally recognized scholar. He currently serves as the President of the Association of American Geographers and brings a wealth of understanding about the important new directions that geography will bring to higher education. He has an international level of visibility because of his research as well as his administrative leadership with the Association of American Geographers. Recently, Dick received recognition as an AAAS fellow. The Association for the Advancement of Science Fellowship is a distinguished honor that very few scientists ever receive.

We have a distinguished and dedicated group of faculty members in the department. Several have won the university’s elite teaching awards. For example, Kevin Blake and Jeff Smith won the KSU Presidential teaching award in back to back years! There are approximately 1200 faculty members at K-State and only 4 receive the Presidential award each year. It is the highest honor bestowed on faculty for teaching excellence. Excellence in teaching certainly continues to be a very high priority in geography.

I know that great things are in store for the future. Needless to say, I am very proud of the geography faculty and their accomplishments. Thanks for providing me with some space to brag about them. They deserve it.

FROM THE PROVOST

Duane Nellis: I am especially pleased to have my long time friend and professional colleague join us here at K-State as the new geography department head. I feel Dick Marston will do an outstanding job in this important role. He and his wife Linda, and daughter Brooke are wonderful additions to the Manhattan community.

I continue to enjoy serving in the role as University provost as we all work together to move K-State forward as one of the premier land grant institutions in the United States. I am proud to say that the geography program certainly makes an important contribution to K-State's success. I was reminded of our historic success as well and how rapidly geography is changing as a discipline as we celebrated GISSAL's 15th Anniversary in November and recognized my colleague Sy Seyler.

Despite all my administrative obligations, I remain active (as much as time allows) in geography as co-editor of Geocarto International, and am working on an edited book on remote sensing. My wife Ruthie and I enjoyed our annual trip to Montana, although a post trip forest fire that started on adjacent U.S. Forest Service land destroyed much of our forested area and a couple of our buildings on our Montana property. An official journey last June to Costa Rica was also a special trip as we strengthened K-State's linkages to key Costa Rican universities, and enjoyed the wonderful biodiversity of the Costa Rican landscape.

SELECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Kevin Blake:

- Faculty Fellowship to support research, from the Charles Redd Center for Western Studies.
- Big 12 Faculty Fellowship to support research, sponsored by K-State and the University of Colorado.
Karen De Bres:
• “Burgers to Britain: the Cultural Geography of McDonald’s UK,” published in the spring issue of the Journal of Cultural Geography.
• Being part of the “rope team” that controlled the giant helium filled birthday balloon at the Manhattan, Kansas birthday parade in June.

Doug Goodin:
• Published, “Land cover associated with hantavirus presence in Paraguay” in Global Ecology and Biogeography.
• Received funding for “Development of UAV Remote Sensing for Ecosystem Research,” from the National Science Foundation.

John Harrington:
• One of five invited international speakers for the July 2005 CEN SAD Science Meeting in Dakar, Senegal, on the value of Sahara and Sahel resources. I was invited to speak on the value of GIScience in sustainable resource development.
• Selected as Co-coordinator of the Kansas Geographic Alliance.
• PI on a new $40,000 grant with the National Park Service.
• Co-PI (with Shawn Hutchinson) on the 4-year, $550,000 Targeted Excellence project, Geospatial Technology Infrastructure Enhancement Program: Phase II.

Lisa Harrington:
• Appointed to editorial Board of The Professional Geographer.

Shawn Hutchinson:
• Contributor to the 2005 ESRI Special Achievement in GIS Award presented to Kansas State University.
• Projects funded by KSU Targeted Excellence Program (GIScience Infrastructure Enhancement – Phase II), Kansas Forest Service, and National Agricultural Biosecurity Center.
• Caught trout while fishing the Firehole and Gibbon Rivers in Yellowstone National Park (July 2005)!

Max Lu:
• Helped develop the interdisciplinary East Asian Studies minor program at K-State.

Dick Marston:
• Elected a "Fellow" in the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).

Charles Martin:
• Article on the Cimarron River appeared in the Annals of the Association of American Geographers in December.

Bimal Paul:
• Received a Small Grant for Exploratory Research (SGER) from the National Science Foundation to study factors associated with compliance to Katrina mandatory hurricane evacuation orders in seven coastal Louisiana parishes.
• Awarded a Senior Research Fellowship by the American Institute of Bangladesh Studies (AIBS) to conduct research on perceived seismic risk and preparedness in Dhaka, Bangladesh for a period of three months.

Jeff Smith:
• Earned a grant from the Charles Redd Center for Western Studies.
• Presented a research paper at the Conference of Latin Americanist Geographers annual meeting; Morelia, Mexico. The title of the paper is: “Connecting the Dots: The Forward and Backward Impacts of Mexicans Laboring in Telluride, Colorado.”
• Have two manuscripts under review and am working on two more.
• Had the opportunity to interact with over 890 students this past academic year in my World Regional, Human, and Geography of Latin America classes.

GISSAL 15th ANNIVERSARY

This past November the Department of Geography formally recognized the 15th anniversary of the Geographic Information Systems Spatial Analysis Laboratory (GISSAL), which was established in 1990. A series of events were held that commemorated both the lab’s proud past and its promising future. In addition to many alumni that returned to Manhattan to help us celebrate this important milestone, we were also pleased to welcome partners from ESRI, including former Wyoming governor Jim Geringer, and GIS leaders from city and state agencies across the state and nation.

Activities on November 17 included a Student Geospatial Research Showcase, featuring not only the work of geographers but also selected students from departments across campus. Geography graduate students Mitch Stimers and David Koch presented their research on tornado early warning systems and the spatial modeling of hantavirus, respectively. That afternoon, Provost Nellis and Vice Provost Unger discussed the future of multidisciplinary geospatial research as embodied by the K-State GIS Commons, a state-of-the-art GIScience collaboratory facility proposed for Seaton Hall. In the evening, over 40 friends and alumni joined current K-State administrators, faculty, and students in the new Alumni Center for a wonderful evening of food, drink, and conversation.
Friday, November 18 was equally busy. The morning kicked off with K-State hosting the State of Kansas GIS Policy Board meeting – the first time this group has met outside of Topeka. The highlights of the meeting were several presentations made by KSU administrators and faculty, including Provost Nellis, that illustrated our leadership in geospatial education and research. Perhaps the most memorable event of the 15th anniversary celebration was the luncheon that followed. Nearly 50 people, including Dr. Sy Seyler, were on hand for a buffet meal and the surprise announcement that the Department of Geography faculty has established, and provided initial funding for, a new GIScience Scholarship in Dr. Seyler’s honor. Festivities concluded Friday afternoon with a terrific presentation by department and GISSL alumnus Jason Sheeley of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

I think that I speak for all involved that GISSL’s 15th anniversary celebration was both memorable and fun, and I want to thank everyone who was able to make time to join us. I’d like to encourage GISSL alumni to stop by for a tour of this evolving facility if your travels take you to, or by, Manhattan. Also, if you would like to help us enhance the newly created “Seyler Scholarship” so that we can continue to recruit and retain world-class students in geography and GIScience, please contact myself (shutch@ksu.edu; 785-532-3414) or Mike Harters (mikeh@found.ksu.edu; 785-532-7524) of the KSU Foundation for further information.

See everyone in 2010 for the 20th anniversary! ---Shawn Hutchinson

EMERITUS NEWS

Chuck Bussing: One of my many joys in retirement has been the opportunity for greater involvement at the Konza Prairie Biological Station as a docent. The activities are not only a continuing learning experience for me, but also a means of sharing knowledge with our visitors through tours and environmental education projects. Every season has its own beauty, but I particularly like the spring when the Prairie Chicken are courting, the Bison calving, and the wild flowers at their peak. Come visit us sometime and enjoy our wonderful Flint Hills research station.

This year has been one of domestic rather than international travel. We began in January with a visit to Greg’s family in Houston where we cheered loudly at all three grandsons’ basketball games. In February, we flew to Santa Rosa, California, to see Heather’s crew with whom we took a short trip to the Monterey Aquarium and the beach. Later in the year, we spent time in Colorado. We attended the annual AAG meeting in Denver with a side trip to Boulder where the CU department hosted a party for graduates.

We have tried to take each grandchild at age seven on a “grandparent’s trip,” but 9/11 delayed Avery’s. In June, we made Colorado Springs our headquarters. Because none of us had taken the train to the top of Pikes Peak, we made that a priority and were fortunate to have a sunny day. The Garden of Gods, the Olympic Center, a drive to Florissant and Cripple Creek where we had a short train trip through gold mining country filled our time.

We leave in early January for Jordan and Egypt. Hopefully, no bullets will be flying our way.

Dave Kromm: In a year enriched by family activities and domestic travel, three highlights stand out. First, in February Matthew David Kromm was born in Boston, and Bobbie and I flew out to meet our new grandchild in March.

Second, in late August we rented a huge, rambling old house on Cape Cod for a week for our entire family to share. There are 13 of us, and everyone remained friends the whole time.

Third, Bobbie and I followed Route 66 from Chicago to Needles, CA, while we were both 66 years of age. It took us 18 days in all, as we drove various alignments, purposefully explored abandoned stretches, and frequently lost our way on
the largely unmarked historic Mother Road. Route 66 is the ultimate road trip!

Other travels took us to Colorado to see Bobbie’ brother and Georgia to visit my sister and to stays with cousins in Michigan, Ohio, and New York City. And I returned to Southwest Kansas for the 26th consecutive year. Our car and frequent flyer miles both increased greatly.

Although my interest in genealogy continues unabated, I am finding that the number of ancestors discovered per hundred hours of research is sharply declining. Most of this past year I have been studying the lives of my family in Mecklenburg in the 18th and 19th centuries (until they emigrated to Michigan in 1852). Mecklenburg was an independent country for a thousand years before becoming part of the German Empire in 1871. I am writing a historical-geography of Mecklenburg to give context for my family history.

**Huber Self:** I saw much Geography of the U.S. in 2005 by going with my son in an RV the entire month of September to see the Sand Hills of Nebraska, the Black Hills and Mount Rushmore Park in South Dakota, the Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming, and the Redwood National Forest in Southern Oregon and Northern California. Also, I visited many relatives in California and Arizona. I came home with many photographs of the entire area.

**Sy Seyler:** Professor Seyler reports that being a member of the leisure class suits him well. Since retiring in January of 2000, Sy and Carolyn have been, and will be, much on the road. Every six to eight weeks they are eastward bound as son Lynn, daughter-in-law Cristina, and grandson Garrett live in a suburb of Washington, D.C. A mountain place near Mammoth Lakes, California in the Easter Sierra lures them for weeks at a time from mid-April to mid-October.

The Seylers are finally at home on Pierre Street where they have redone Carolyn’s family home, a cozy cape cod on three lots with seventy year-old oaks. A garage and much landscaping have yet to be done.

Sy managed to miss all e-mails set to KSU following his retirement. So, apologies are due those who received no replies. Please do write to jografer@kansas.net or jografer@earthlink.net He favors the former as a first choice since he can get a local access number when traveling with a trusty Sony laptop.

**Steve Stover:** For several years I have been salting away bits of information about Department doings. Now I’m joined by four other Emeriti (Chuck Bussing, Dave Kromm, Huber Self, and Sy Seyler) in organizing that and other material into a history of geography at KSU. (Huber has already written about the period, 1863-1990.) Geography Department activities and events elsewhere on campus have lured me back several times; most notable was the visit of Mikhail Gorbachev in October.

My personal life is still adjusting to the loss of my wife, Enid, after 60 memorable years of marriage. In June, family and friends held the “Enid Stover Poetry Recitation.” It was a success, and the plan is to make it an annual affair. Very big family news was the arrival of a very small person, my first great grandchild, a girl named Molly. (Great grandfather? I can’t believe it.) I have frequent contact with family members, and in June I visited our two far West daughters and their families. Our New Zealand daughter plans to spend ten days with me here next month. My culinary efforts have won no prizes, but my soup *du jour* is always a masterpiece.

I’m thoroughly occupied with day to day activities and problems, and even some writing and reading—most recently, Jane Camerini (ed): *The Alfred Russel Wallace Reader*. (Wallace shared with Charles Darwin development of the evolution theory—a timely topic, at least in Kansas.)
Continuing satisfaction comes from renewing contacts with former students, often at unexpected times and places. Keep surprising me!

Seyler Undergraduate GIScience Scholarship

As introduced during the GISSAL 15th Anniversary celebration in November, the Department of Geography is pleased to announce a new undergraduate scholarship opportunity. The Seyler Undergraduate GIScience Scholarship is supported by alumni, friends, and faculty of the Department of Geography and is bestowed in the name of emeritus faculty member H.L. "Sy" Seyler. Dr. Seyler retired in 2000 after having devoted nearly three decades of professional service to the advancement of both geography and geographic information science at Kansas State University.

In addition to publishing numerous articles in academic journals, his teaching touched the lives of a generation of geographers and geographic information system (GIS) professionals across the nation. Dr. Seyler was a GIS pioneer in the State of Kansas and was a driving force behind the creation of the successful Geographic Information Systems Spatial Analysis Laboratory (GISSAL) at Kansas State University.

Candidates wishing to apply for the Seyler Undergraduate GIScience Scholarship must have at least junior standing at the time the scholarship will be awarded and prepare a one-page narrative discussing both their accomplishments and future plans for using geospatial technologies in their geographical research or employment. Applicants will be evaluated based upon the quality of their one-page narrative, overall grade point average, instructor assessments from geospatial technology courses, two letters of reference, and qualitative evaluation of student potential. Undergraduate geographers with interests in all subfields of geography are encouraged to apply.

Applications materials must be turned into the Department of Geography office by March 1 or as specified by the department head. Geography faculty members will evaluate each candidate's application and make an award recommendation to the department head. The scholarship winner will be announced each spring semester during the annual GTU Banquet, which is generally held in late April.

Please contact Shawn Hutchinson (shutch@k-state.edu; 785-532-6727) from the Department of Geography or Mike Harders from the KSU Foundation (mikeh@found.ksu.edu; 785-532-7524) for more information on how to make a single or annual financial contribution to this new scholarship. Your efforts to help our department continue to recruit and retain world-class geographers and GIScientists is greatly appreciated!

REMEMBERING A FRIEND

John Johnson (BA 1967, MA 1973) died January 2, 2006. John was a devoted son, husband, father, and grandfather who took much pride in his family. John also took pride in his work at Hale (Farrell) Library, in K-State governance, as a farmer, and as a partner with Ann Scott in Lee Creek Gardens. The title of John's MA thesis was "Awareness of Soil Erosion in Eastern Kansas" and reflects his love of the land. He was proud to be a geographer.

John was Associate Professor in Government Publications and Document References at Hale Library. Each year John gave a tour of library resources for new graduate students, and he developed and maintained the geography subject guide. He was the person geography faculty and students went to when they needed library assistance for classes and research. John willingly helped all who asked.
John was active in Gamma Theta Upsilon, a charter member of the St. George Geographical Society, and a supportive participant in geography alumni affairs and functions. For many years, he was captain of the geography bowling team in a faculty league.

John's commitment to life was wonderful. The K-State Geography community will miss his friendship.

The K-State GAMMA THETA UPSILON Chapter is named the 2005 Chapter of the Year

The Beta Psi chapter at Kansas State University has been named the 2005 GTU Chapter of the Year by Gamma Theta Upsilon - International Geographical Honor Society. The award is given to an outstanding chapter that exemplifies active participation at their school. This is the second time in recent years that the K-State chapter has won the prestigious award. The Beta Psi chapter was the 2000 GTU Chapter of the Year.

Though small in size, the Beta Psi chapter is one of the most active in the United States and the new Chapter of the Year designation is but the most recent accolade to be bestowed upon it. The chapter uses a number of ways to reach geography students and actively recruits qualified individuals into the organization. Usually 5-10 new members are initiated every year. One fact that attests to the quality of the students in K-State’s Geography Department is that in three of the last five years a member of the Beta Psi chapter won the Buzzard or Richason scholarships, awarded annually based on nationwide competition.

The Beta Psi chapter has been extremely active in organizing or sponsoring various activities that fulfill the organization’s mission, which is to advance geographic knowledge and increase public awareness of geography.

What has distinguished the Beta Psi chapter is that not only has it been well organized, very active and successful in fulfilling the GTU mission, but it has maintained consistently a high level of excellence in doing so over the many years. Its Chapter of the Year recognition is well deserved. —Faculty Advisor, Max Lu

GAMMA THETA UPSILON

Gamma Theta Upsilon has been very active this year, participating in many of the usual activities including Bramlage cleanup and Adopt-a-Highway program, as well as many social functions. During the fall 2005 semester, GTU sponsored a “bad science” movie night, showing the entertaining but not too believable, The Day After Tomorrow. We also sponsored the annual GTU Fall Picnic at Tuttle Creek. Near the middle of the semester, we held a pizza lunch that was open to all in the department, and just before breaking for Christmas, the first GTU chili lunch was held in the seminar room. Many graduate students as well as faculty and staff attended to socialize and sample the six delicious pots of chili that were made by students and staff.

The AAG’s headquarters in Washington D.C. is currently undergoing renovation, and with a matching donation from Dr. Marston, GTU donated $250 to the fund which entitles us to a brick, placed in the newly renovated area, commemorating K-State geography’s assistance.

Guest speakers as well as the ongoing brown bag series talks have been a highlight of the year so far. With some changes in the availability of funding within the department, GTU has been called upon to secure funding where possible. To date, we have been granted over $1500 by the K-State Student Government Association to
help fund several speakers. Events such as Jason Sheeley’s talk at the GISSAL 15th anniversary celebration, and the University Distinguished Lecture Series, featuring a presentation by B.L. Turner II, Clark University’s geography department director and Higgins Professor of Environment and Society have been put on with a little help from GTU. Please refer to pages 21 and 22 of this newsletter for the brown bag talks and public lectures.

Speakers scheduled for the spring semester include Dr. Bill Wyckoff from Montana State University, and Dr. Kirsten Dow from the University of South Carolina.

In addition to more guest speakers, we have the GTU spring banquet coming up, at which several new members will be initiated. Overall, it has been a great year so far, and we are looking forward to several social events, our spring highway cleanup, and one more Bramlage fundraiser! Here’s wishing everyone all the best in the upcoming semester! --President, Mitch Stimers

**GRADUATE STUDENT PROFILES**

**Vicki Tinnon Brock:** The past year has been quite hectic for me. I successfully defended my dissertation proposal and began to focus on writing. In late April, I was offered an opportunity to work with Dr. Peter Herlihy (University of Kansas) in Mexico as part of team research effort. The team spent three months collecting data on land tenure regime and securing the necessary information to create a Mexico GIS. Prior to my Mexico trip, I once again spent two weeks in the Sonoran and Mojave Deserts with Dr. Glenn Sebastian and his group of students from the University of South Alabama. We added Death Valley National Park this year and it was truly amazing. When I left the group, I met my father in Las Vegas, Nevada and spent a couple of days touring Zion and Arches with him. I recovered with a few quiet days in Aspen, Colorado.

In the middle of the summer, I returned to the United States to attend an international symposium that focused on medical geography and I presented a paper dealing with my continued research on cancer in Mobile County, Alabama. I returned to Manhattan in August and began preparing lectures for Environmental Geography. My semester started out smoothly, but Hurricane Katrina soon interrupted it. My family lived in Ocean Springs, Mississippi and they were hit hard by the storm surge. My mother, sister, and niece are now living in Manhattan - they love the community but are still adjusting to the winter weather! Recent events have prevented me from making much progress on the dissertation, but my goal is to finish in late spring/early summer and defend in the fall. Go Wildcats!

**Matt Gerike:** Two more semesters of coursework and three more semesters of teaching are almost under the belt (as I write in early December 2005). Graduate-level courses in English, Sociology, and Women's Studies during the year kept the wheels turning, trying to make geographical sense out of whole other bodies of knowledge and the geography of academic disciplinarity. The highlight of 2005 was teaching a 17-student summer section of Human Geography, which turned out to be enlightening and fun for most everyone involved - including me. Aside from traveling to Denver for the AAG, most of my travel has been 5 to 7 hours east, plying sections of I-70, US 24, US 40, US 50, and K-10, spending time with family and making a last pilgrimage to the 2nd Busch Stadium. Certainly nothing exotic, but keeping my eyes open on these drives subtly reminds me of why geography makes
sense and how geography can make mundane things addictively interesting.

Scott Deaner: I am currently in my second year as a Ph.D. student here in the Department of Geography at K-State. I was raised in the coalfields of West Virginia where my father and both of my grandfathers were underground coal miners. I am the first person in my family to attend college and I am very proud of my Appalachian roots. My current research looks at the role that St. Louis Cardinals baseball plays in forming regional identity.

My wife and I were married this summer on the campus of Ohio University. Terri and I chose the site for our wedding because it was the place where we first met. I completed my M.A. in Geography at Ohio University in 2004 and she graduated with a degree in Meteorology in 2003. We celebrated our marriage by taking a baseball road-trip. The morning after our wedding we left Athens, Ohio for the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York. After a couple of days in Cooperstown, we attended baseball games in Baltimore, Maryland, Washington, DC, Cincinnati, Ohio and St. Louis, Missouri. We concluded our honeymoon with a July 4th game in Kansas City.

Chris Laingen: I’m a first year PhD student from the small Norwegian farming community of Odin, Minnesota. I graduated from South Dakota State University in 2003 with my M.S. in Geography. I then worked for two years for the City of Sioux Falls, South Dakota in their GIS Division. While I enjoyed my job and the people I worked with, I knew it was time to get back to academia. So, after my week-long Canadian fishing trip and my month-long trip to Europe (where I frequented many beer gardens and watched Lance Armstrong win his 7th Tour De France), I found myself in mid-August attending T.A. training and learning about the KSU health insurance program. A bit of a shock coming back from almost two months of vacation, but nonetheless, it was the beginning of what has already been a great time here in Manhattan. The faculty, staff, and my fellow students are all wonderful. I look forward to what the future has to hold.

Sumanth Gopala Reddy: I am a first year Ph.D. student new to the state of Kansas. I was born and raised in Bangalore, India until my family emigrated to the U.S. at the age of 14. Traveling is my passion and it has taken me to different parts of the world while experiencing life in various unique cultures. From Bangalore to Colombo, Hong Kong to Kuala Lumpur and from Athens to London, Accra to Timbuktu and finally the Little Apple, life has taught me many valuable lessons. I try to take one lesson from each place and Manhattan, KS has one for me. I am lucky to have not just one, but two wonderful families. The faculty in our Geography department has to be the best set of people I have come across in any department and I never thought graduate students can be as close as we are here. Room # 164G will always be the hang out spot with many more memories to come.

My interests are primarily in the areas of 3rd World development, Cultural, Political and Human Geography. My research interests are in the field of Medical Geography, specifically Medical Tourism. It is a new phenomenon that will take me the length and breadth of the globe for research. I hope to graduate in three years and teach in a university in the near future. It did not take me long to realize
that I have come to the right place because of the awesome people in this department.

**Mitchel Stimers**: Halfway through my second year as a masters student, I am looking forward to graduating in the spring, and beginning work on my Ph.D. in the summer. Thesis research and writing has been my main focus over Christmas break, and into the new year. My thesis involves developing a severity index to describe the effects of tornadoes on communities. Rather than basing a rating on estimated wind speeds, I am looking at the effects on the community as a whole in terms of injuries and deaths as well as economic impacts. I will be giving my thesis defense a "test run" at the AAG meeting this spring in Chicago. This past September I presented a project at the AAG-GPRM regional meeting in Laramie, Wyoming, that involved analyzing the emergency warning siren networks in Riley, Pottawatomie, and Wabaunsee Counties. I was fortunate enough to win first place in the student poster competition for that project. At the same meeting, I was also one of two K-State geographers that qualified for the GPRM geobowl team, so it was a very productive weekend for me! This fall, GISSAL celebrated its 15th anniversary, and I presented the same research at the geospatial showcase, which was attended by the emergency planners, from who I collected data on siren placement, from Riley and Wabaunsee Counties. They informed me that my research would be very helpful in selecting placement for the new siren network in Wabaunsee County and making some adjustments to the existing network in Pottawatomie County.

In October, myself along with Will Breitkreutz, and Dr. Lisa Harrington from the geography department and Shannon Krueger and Dr. Joyce Gordon from the department of mass communication traveled to New Orleans and surrounding areas affected by hurricane Katrina to conduct oral interviews of evacuees and victims. Dr. Bimal Paul is the principal investigator on the project, which is supported by a grant from the National Science Foundation. The goal of the research is to uncover reasons why people would choose not to evacuate when given a “mandatory” order to do so. It was a long week of work and travel, but touring New Orleans was something I will never forget. The destruction was massive, and seemed to go on forever. On the positive side, the food down there was outstanding, and the people were mostly pleasant, even after the terrific ordeals we heard them tell us about.

Teaching lab sections in environmental geography as well as fulfilling the duties as president of GTU have kept me very busy this past semester, and I anticipate the spring semester to be more of the same. But it has been worth it so far; I have really enjoyed my time, courses, and friends here, and hope to be around for a while longer!

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**DEPARTMENT GRADUATES**

**Congratulations and Best Wishes!**

Spring 2005, Bachelor of Science

- Brian Walker Anderson
- Katherine Elizabeth Bartko
- Katie Lynn Haselwood
- Christopher Keith Hauser
- Matthew H. John
- Vincent J. Lombardi
- Aaron Robert Paris
- Rorik Ford Peterson
- Ryan Christopher Regehr
- Andrew Joseph Von Lintel
- Kortney Dawn White
Fall 2005
Bachelor of Science
Anderson, Jesse Ray
Rittscher, Andrew S.

Spring 2005
Master of Arts
Lori Lynn Emerson
Scott Leis
Allen Lee Schweitzer
Sam E Hiett

Summer 2005
Master of Arts
Shane Csiki

Fall 2005
Master of Arts
Toni Davis
Brooke Stansberry

Spring 2005
Doctor of Philosophy
John Clinton Jacobs
Johnny Coomansingh
Gregory S. Vandeberg

MASTER THESES 2005


DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS 2005


2005 SCHOLARSHIP AND AWARD WINNERS

*Huber Self Geography Scholarship*
Clancy Jensen

*Len LeBlanc Outstanding Undergraduate Award*
Rorik Peterson

*William Grimm Memorial Scholarship*
Sean Winkler

*White Geography GTA Excellence Award*
Will Breitkreutz

*National Council for Geographic Education Award*
Matthew John

*Graduate Student Leadership Award*
Vicki Tinnon Brock
   Tom Vought

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LECTURE SERIES 2005

*Nanda Shrestha*, Florida A&M University (January 21) "Development of Tourism and the Formation of Geocapital at the Periphery: Where is Nepal Headed."

*Richard A. Marston*, Oklahoma State University (January 28) "The Geographic Advantage in Studies of Environmental Change."

*Philip W. Suckling*, University of Northern Iowa (February 1) "A Climatology of Tornado Path Direction for the Central and Eastern United States."


*Peter Molnar*, University of Colorado (February 24) "Uplift of Mountains, Climate Change and Human Evolution: Choosing the Red Herring among Chickens and Eggs (or How Climate Change Fools Us)."

*Dydia DeLyser*, Louisiana State University, (February 25) "Doing Qualitative Geography."

*Francis Dodoo*, Pennsylvania State University, (March 7) "Sex, HIV risk, and Living Poor In African Cities."

*Stacy Hutchinson*, Kansas State University (March 10) "Modeling Phytoremediation Potentials of Contaminated Ground Water."

*Chris Henrie*, Pittsburgh State University (March 11) "The Emergence of a West Coast Megalopolis and its Role within the United States Interurban Migration System."

*Dan Powell*, U.S. E.P.A. (April 5) "The triad Approach and Other Approaches to Brownfields Development."

*Keith C. Clarke*, University of California, Santa Barbara (April 14) "Complex Geography and Geographical Complexity."

*Kathy Parker*, University of Georgia (April 28) "A Journey of Hope."
Bill Turner, Clark University (September 16) "Land Change Science and the Southern Yucatan."

Emilio Moran, Indiana University (September 29) "Population and Environment in the Amazon Basin."

Matthew Shumway, Brigham Young University (October 14) "Amenity Levels, Perception and the Rural West as Sacrifice Zone: The Case of Tooele County, Utah."

David Orr, Oberlin College (October 24) "Lessons from Katrina: Landscapes, Politics and Global Change."

Jason Sheeley, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (November 18) "GISSAL, the Gift that Keeps on Giving."

Matt Gerike, Kansas State University (December 2) "Geographies of the Sante Fe Trail: Marking and Memories."

Matthew Bechdol, Kansas State University (December 8) "GIS in Agri Biosecurity: From Farm to Factory to Federal."

BROWN BAGS

- Jeffrey Smith, February 8, “Threads of Guatemala’s Contemporary Tapestry.”
- Dydia DeLyser, February 25, “Writing Geography—And Finishing Your Thesis or Dissertation.”
- Ben Champion, September 21, “The Emerging Importance of Local Food in Eastern Kansas.”
- Corina Sanders, September 28, “Careers in the State Department.”
- Dave Kromm, November 16, “Discovering the Mother Road: Cruising Route 66 while 66.”

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS
(The Geography Department Fund, William D. Grimm Memorial Scholarship, Huber Self Geography Scholarship, Rumsey Bissell Marston Scholarship, and the White Geography GTA Excellence Award
January 1, 2005 to December 31, 2005)

We appreciate your loyal support!

Dean Andrew, Scott and Donna Goltry, Tex Le Blanc III
Cheryl Blake, Kelly and Karen Gregg, Richard Lissitschenko
The Boeing Company, James Grimm, Joann Luehring
Candace Bogart, Dale Grunewald, Richard and Linda Marston
Vicki Boyd-Kennedy, John Harrington Jr., Devin and Kymberly Martin
Dennis Courville, Jason Holcomb, John Merryfield
Johnny Cyr, Rick Illgnner, Tod Meyn
Duke Energy Field Services LP, Lloyd Johnson, David and Mary Ann Miller
Kimberlea Edgington, Chris Jones, Lee Mueller
Jack Frost, Steven Kale, Diponker Mukherjee
Robert Gaul, Kara Kuntz, Bradley and Kristen Rundquist
ALUMNI NEWS

Jason Auvil: (BS 1998, MRCP 2005) I completed my bachelor of science in Geography and my masters in Regional and Community Planning from the College of Architecture, Planning and Design at Kansas State University. The faculty members of the Planning department are great educators and instructors. I recommend every Geography student take a planning course or look into planning as a career choice/option.

Jon Archer: (MA 2003) When Mike Zimney married Karina Busch on March 12th, 2005 in Fargo, North Dakota, I flew over for the weekend to give him a “K-state Geography congratulations!” Also, Nate Kettle has returned from the Peace Corps in the Gambia, and at his parent’s home near KU for a short time. I am afraid I don't have must too report. I’m living in Attleborough, Norfolk. Working for an environmental consultancy firm in Norwich.

Tracy Brown: (BS 2002, NRES, MA 2004) Employer: US Army Corps of Engineers, Kansas City District Title: Geographer Brady and I are living in Tonganoxie, Kansas. Email: tracy.l.brown@usace.army.mil


Becky Schuerman Choi: (BA 1994) Our daughter, Greta Vienna Choi, was born March 6, 2005. Weight: 7 lbs, Length: 20 inches. Mom and Dad think she’s adorable.

Johnny “JCee” Coomansingh: (MA 2002, Ph.D 2005) Dragging a U-Haul trailer packed to the brim with the bare necessities of my existence, namely boxes of books, and more boxes of books, files and folders, computer, a dining table, bed, clothing, and other miscellaneous paraphernalia, I set out on a journey from Springfield, Missouri to Minot, North Dakota. I was driving in the summer of 2005 to a destination I knew nothing of to take up a tenure-track position at Minot State University (MSU). Interstate 29 reeled out before me like a long never-ending ribbon as I passed smiling fields of corn, lush green expanses of Soya bean, beet, potato, and sunflower. Driving alone did not help.

During the days prior to the opening of the fall semester, I gathered up my frazzled self and put together four syllabi for the up-coming courses: GEOG110—Principles of Geography, GEOG161—World Regional Geography, GEOG262—Geography of North America and GEOG366—Geography of Latin America. As we all could see, I had four preps, and Morpheus was missing in action… but that’s the life and I enjoy it.

All in all I am enjoying what there is to be enjoyed in Minot. I sometimes spend a few hours on a Wednesday evening with the history professors, Joseph Jastrzembski, Bethany Andreasen, Ernst
Pijning and Daniel Ringrose playing trivia at the Blue Rider pub. The Blue Rider is a literal billabong for Minot State intellectuals. The Minot Chamber Chorale attracted me and I promptly jumped in as a baritone singer for the annual Renaissance Feast, which meant that I had to wear tights as did King Henry the VIII. I had a blast! The Norwegian Hostfest with it’s thousands of visitors came and went. Although I did not attend, I eventually came into view of some Scandinavian people while visiting the Scandinavian Park here in Minot and sooner than later, I was initiated as a member of The Sons of Norway. The joke about me being a Son of Norway is that I am from the southern part of Norway...maybe during the Pangaea era when Trinidad was joined up to the rest of the world. The fact is I have been accepted into the Norwegian scheme of things in Minot. I have also eaten some Lutefisk with butter at a Lutheran Church dinner. I was amazed to see how folk out here eat gobs and gobs of the stuff.

One of the fears I entertained before accepting the Minot State position was the probable scarcity of topics for research, but my fears have been allayed. There is so much Norwegian/Scandinavian culture up here in Minot and surrounding districts that one could study the area for an entire lifetime and still not complete the many virile facets available for research. In the spring semester, I will be teaching GEOG263—Geography of North Dakota and this will give me greater insights of what I would want to concentrate on in terms of research. It is hoped that I will join my UND colleagues, Drs. Gregory Vandeberg and Brad Rundquist in writing up a grant for research on Devil’s Lake and the impact it has had on the surrounding communities.

In terms of scholastic development, I did quite a few things this semester. I presented a paper: The Dry River Runs Red: Murder, Mayhem and Misery “Behind the Bridge” at the Laramie AAG/GPRM Conference and Eye Candy: An Exhibition of Sexuality and Sensuality in the pre-Lenten Trinidad Carnival, hosted by the Linguistic Circle of Manitoba and North Dakota (LCMND), at Minot State University. I was also given the opportunity to give the keynote address at UND’s GTU banquet. The address was titled: If it’s not geography, then tell me what it is. I am continuing my research on calypso, ethnic cuisine, the steelpan, HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean, and rural America.

The topography of Minot is a little more interesting than Grand Forks’ altogether pancake appearance. The City of Minot is set in the valley between the North Hill and the South Hill. Flowing through the valley is the Mouse (Sourris) River, which adds a subtle beauty and unique ambience to Oak Park especially at this time of the year when the park is all decorated and lighted up for the holiday (Christmas?) season. With regard to Minot’s proximity to the North Pole, I believe at times that I am living in Santa’s backyard. Minot was rudely awakened with a major dump of snow during the first week of October. Some here say that this was quite peculiar but anybody could say anything in Minot when icicles form inside their ears and over their eyelids, and when spit hits the ground like hailstones. I now know why Professor of American Literature and Composition here at MSU, Margret Sherve recently presented: Those Crazy Settlers!: Insanity Among Early Women Settlers in North Dakota. Recently someone asked me if I do not feel isolated in Minot. What can I say, it’s like any other place shaped by American dreams and values...yes, Walmart is here, and a zillion or so churches, if not more! To answer that special person’s question, sometimes at night I peer through my kitchen window and wonder how a Caribbean dweller like me could cope with this environment...no real answer. I do what I have to do. As I stand in that “isolated” spot, all that remains is the flicker of Christmas lights of the houses in the distance gazing upon the silhouettes of the railcars of the Union Pacific as they slowly amble along carrying tall pallets of Weyheusers’ lumber.

Johnny “JCee” Coomansingh, Assistant Professor of Geography and Coordinator—Geography Program, Minot State University

Mitchell Fiedler: (BS 2000) recently became the Deputy Plans Manager for the Air Force Air Combat Command’s GeoBase Program at Langley AFB, VA, focusing on GIS policy and guidance issues. After graduation, he began traveling the country working for the Kansas Geological Survey’s Exploration Services as a Research Technician and later a Graduate Research Assistant
while attending graduate school at the University of Kansas. Having realized his traitorous error, he took a position with K-State’s National Institute of Land Management and Training in 2002 as a GIS Analyst for the Army’s Integrated Training Area Management Program at Fort Rucker, AL. In 2003, he transferred to Fort Sill, OK to continue work as an analyst with ITAM. He now resides in Newport News, VA with his son, Mason and their yellow lab, Porter.

Kent Hilbert: (MS 1997) I am currently residing in Brandon, Mississippi. Though, that will change probably after the Holiday Season. I have been unemployed (since October 2005). Actually, it's probably the best thing that has happened to me in a long time because working at Jackson State University (JSU) was extremely dissatisfying. Some promising opportunities (and difficult choices) are on our horizon (I have a significant other, Lynn, that I plan on marrying; she is one fantastic lady!).

I do have some unfinished business at JSU in the form of manuscripts. In late August 2005, I submitted a manuscript to the Journal of Coastal Resources that discusses land cover changes occurring within the Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve and am waiting to hear from that journal's editor. I am also the primary author of another manuscript that must undergo revision before it is publishable; one that discusses a GIS-based hurricane storm surge tool that JSU developed for Harrison County, Mississippi.

Lynn and I did survive Katrina (a category 1 storm when it passed over the Jackson area). She's a nurse who works for Mississippi's Health Department and, as soon as things quieted down, was sent down to the coast to assist. I stayed at her house and looked after her dog, Max. Max and I are buddies now (if we were not already). Having never weathered a hurricane before, it was definitely an experience for me.

Well, I'll close for now. Until next time, all the best!

Jerry Holden: (BS 1996, MA1998) MONROE, La., September 30, 2005 – Ducks Unlimited (DU) is pleased to announce the promotion of Jerry Holden to Director of Conservation Programs in Louisiana. Holden, who will transfer with his wife Melissa to Monroe, La., has worked for DU as the Manager of GIS and Remote Sensing for nearly 6 years. He will join a staff of ten biologists and engineers who are responsible for DU's habitat conservation programs in Louisiana. Check out this link: http://southern.ducks.org/news_jerry_holden.php.

Melissa and Jerry are expecting their first child, a baby boy, in late March 2006.

Jim Janke (MA 1976), Mailing Address: 16031 2nd St N, Lakeland MN 55043 E-mail Address: k9wie@comcast.net Occupation: Community Resource Development Agent for St. Croix County, Wisconsin Employer: University of Wisconsin-Cooperative Extension.

Nathan Kettle: (BS 2001, MA 2003) There’s no place like home. During my first week back in Kansas there was a tornado warning in the evening, and a winter snow advisory the next day. The past two years in The Gambia, West Africa, were absolutely amazing. I began my service as a Peace Corps Volunteer living and working in a small rural community of 600 people, during which time I lived with a host family, spoke their native language (Wolof), actively took part in village life, taught agro forestry skills to community members, and assisted at a local primary school. One of my favorite projects was working with a 5th grade teacher and his class on the completion a 2x10 meter mural of The Gambia on the side of their school. Murals are such a great project for teaching art, geography, English, and math. During my second year I transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture Soil and Water Management Division where I assisted in the development of an agricultural pest manual and the integration of GIS and technology into projects and research. My projects continually faced cultural and
environmental challenges, and progress was slow, but they contributed to environmental sustainability in The Gambia. I also had the opportunity to visit other countries in Western and Southern Africa that highlighted the diversity of the “Dark Continent.” It’s wonderful to be back with friends and family again as I readjust to the US and apply to a doctoral program in geography.

**Leonard LeBlanc III:** (BS 1973) sent a Christmas card from Iraq, where he has been stationed. Len reports: I'll be moving to a new base very shortly near Baghdad International Airport. Best regards to everyone connected with KSU Geography and have a great 2006!

**Tadesse Kidane-Mariam:** (MA 1974) I graduated from KSU in 1974 and then went to the University of Iowa for my Ph.D. program. I spent almost 25 years in government service as urban researcher, planner, commissioner and Minister before I returned to Iowa and completed my Ph.D in 2001. I am currently teaching at Edinboro University of Pennsylvania in Edinboro, Erie. My research interests lie in environmental management and urban/regional development in Africa and the developing parts of the world. I live with my wife and three children two of whom are currently attending Edinboro university of Pennsylvania. My daughter graduated from the University two years ago with great distinction in business administration and is currently working as a mortgage consultant in Cleveland Ohio.

**Scott R. Leis:** (MA 2005) Scott who is in the Peace Corps, Marine Resources Management Division writes to the Geography Department: I’ve recently been on a trip to the outer islands of yap to monitor the trochus (a type of semi-valuable shell) harvest. Three other guys and I took the Micro Spirit, which as glamorous as it sounds, is not. It is really more of a cargo ship with a few cabins about the size of a dorm room. I was lucky enough to get a bed in one, but I had to share the room with one of my coworkers’ families. Anyway, I left on December 3rd and spent seven days in route to the island of Fachelap which is a small atoll made up of three small islands. Along the way we stopped at Ulithi Atoll, Fais, Euripik, Woleai, Ifilik and finally Fachelap. I got off at each island along the way and talked or drank tuba (an alcoholic coconut drink) with the locals. I was lucky enough to spend a week in Fachelap. Miss you all.

**Anthony Paul Mannion:** (former Ph.D. student) completed course work at Fort Hays State University in 2005 to become a certified teacher. He is currently teaching Spanish at Dundalk High School in Baltimore County, Maryland and lives with his wife Haley (BS 2004) in Towson, Maryland.

**Risto Marttinen:** (MA 1965) He’s training for Virginia Senior games – sprints, discus, softball hit-and-throw and, for the National Senior Games in Pittsburgh in June for 200m and 400m sprints. His wife Shirley Wampler, retired nurse is one of the best runners in Virginia in 1500m and 10k. She will compete at both events. Risto continues to publish. The latest is in the Richmond Times-Dispatch on the teaching of counter-evolution “theories” in biology classes, or rearguing the 1871 issues of Darwin, Wallace, Huxley. He says, “At least we have gotten beyond the confederacy!”

**Luke Marzen:** (Ph.D 2001) is in his forth year as an Assistant Professor at Auburn University. He has spent a great deal of time establishing a Remote Sensing Consortium in Alabama through the national AmericaView Program and has submitted a proposal to the university to start a M.S. degree in Geography at Auburn. This past summer Luke made his first trip across Iowa on his bike during the Des Moines Register's Annual Great Bikeride Across Iowa (Ragbrai).

**Stacy Bennett (Meredith):** (BS 2000) Stacy and her husband returned to Chicago after spending the 2004 election cycle in Washington DC working on campaigns. Stacy is a Senior Account Executive
with Chicago's largest public affairs firm where she focuses on political consulting and lobbying.

**John P. McKenzie:** (MA 1997) This year has been one of many changes. In late August, I accepted a new position at a non-profit organization in Rockville, Maryland catering to regulatory affairs professionals in the healthcare industry. I am an Education Program Manager there, which is similar to the previous position I held at a pharmaceutical education training organization in Arlington, Virginia for the past 4 1/2 years. I sold my house in Washington but am still living in the area. I enjoyed Thanksgiving in New York City and am looking forward to an exciting year ahead with many more personal and professional changes.

**Jon McManis:** (BS 1993) Professor Kromm was a huge impact and difference in my education and career. Of course, I can’t forget Karen De Bres’ Geography of Europe, Chuck Martin and Bimal Paul. My international “Bob Dole fellowship” was a priceless experience. The department and classes were the best part of my K-State experience. I would enjoy staying in touch with some fellow alumni in the future.

**Sharon Parks-Mandel:** (MA 1983) Sharon is married to Rolfe Mandel, who is a geomorphologist at Kansas Geological Survey in Lawrence. She has a 13-year-old son and spends a lot of time on the road to soccer games. Sharon has been working in the field of forensic science for nine years at the Shawnee County coroner’s office as chief medical investigator.

**Lee Mueller:** (BS 1994) is co-owner and co-operator of Laus Creek Farm, Inc. in Hiawatha. The nearly 3,000-acre corn & soybean farm highly utilizes GPS for guidance, mapping (farm-specific GIS software), and automated steering. Also, Lee is employed by the Outback Guidance division. http://www.outbackguidance.com/

Lee has a daughter, Megan and is married to Cara (BS Hotel & Restaurant Management 2001.)

**Linda Patterson:** (BS 1976, MA 1981) In 2005, I continue to work as an associate planner for

Kennewick, Washington. This is a town similar to Manhattan with a 2005 population of 60,410. When I began work here in 1992 the population was approximately 42,000. I plan to retire in 2006 so I can spend more time with my grandchildren who are in Topeka, Kansas and Chapel Hill, North Carolina. My oldest granddaughter, Elaina Murray, won the scholarship to Case Western at the National History Day in Baltimore in June. Also in June my newest granddaughter, Alexandra Marin Raborn, was born in North Carolina. Her dad (my son) is also a K-State graduate in geography - Craig Raborn. I have just returned from 2 weeks in Florence, Italy. Hugs from Washington.

**Laura Peck:** (BS 1977) In 2005, I've finished up my Ph.D. classroom work in Adult and Continuing Education at KSU. Just a little more research/writing to do, and I'll have all the requirements completed.

**Brian Parr:** (MA 1998) Our second child, Isabella Louise, was born in September, nicely rounding out our family. Also in September, our son Max hit the two’s with a vengeance and ever since has been keeping us on constant alert status. Kidding aside, we’re blessed to be with these two healthy and beautiful children. At work, I’ve gotten more involved with the management of ESRI Press workbooks. New titles I was involved with this year include, Mapping Our World: GIS Lessons for Educators, ArcView 9 Edition (Malone, Palmer, Voigt), GIS Tutorial (Kurland and Gorr), and Think Globally, Act Regionally (LeGates).

**Barbara Potts:** (BS 1968, Grad Student from 1968 to 1970) I am currently the City Councilwoman for Ward 2 in Fairlawn, Ohio...a small suburb of Akron. I am half way through my 4-year term in office and will probably run again. I have found this job very exciting since the City is dealing with land use issues, flooding problems, and future planning that includes maintaining value in an aging housing stock, development of an office/research park, and establishing wireless communications within the City. My husband,
Jerry’s (Ph.D M.E., 1970), business has become almost totally Asian focused with customers in China, India and Korea. Our company builds high tech tire test equipment for test laboratories and automobile safety testing equipment (think crash testing here). Our oldest daughter's husband works for the US State Department as a Foreign Service Officer. They have been stationed in US Embassy in Bishkek, US Consular Office in Montreal, and will going to US Embassy in Manila in August of 2006. Two of our daughters are in California, one in Los Angeles, and the youngest is in Monterrey where she works for SAIC as a research meteorologist for the Naval Research Laboratory. Our son works for his dad as a Computer Systems Analyst. We have two granddaughters and one grandson...and a second grandson due any day.

Ryan Reker: (MA 2004) This past year has been an exciting one for me. My wife Amie and I had our first child (Alexander) in January of 2005. We are having a great time watching him grow up, how much they change in a single year!

I currently work for the US Fish & Wildlife Service as the GIS/Science Coordinator for the Rainwater Basin Joint Venture in Grand Island, Nebraska. I started in August 2004 after graduating from K-State and am still learning the intricacies of the landscape. The Joint Venture is a partner organization that works on restoring wetlands and providing migratory waterfowl habitat. The Rainwater Basins in conjunction with the Great Bend Area of the Platte River host over 20 million birds (mostly ducks, geese, and cranes) during their spring migration to nesting grounds farther north. I highly recommend a visit in March to see the spectacle. It is truly breathtaking. This past year also saw the organization of the Great Plains GIS Partnership (of which I am a member). The G2P2 is a collaborative GIS shop that co-locates equipment and personnel from federal agencies and NGOs together to work on multi-scale collaborative GIS projects. I plan on attending the national AAG and ASPRS conferences this year to showcase a few of the innovative projects we are working on in the ‘basins' including: a comprehensive vegetation mapping initiative and spring wetland habitat survey - both completed using our color-infrared aerial camera system, hope to see some of you at the conferences. I hope this new year brings good health and good fortune to all of you.

Kristen (Klimstra) Rundquist: (MA 2000) works for the U.S. Department of Defense as the Natural and Cultural Resources Manager and the Air Quality Manager in the Environmental Management Flight of the Civil Engineer Squadron at the Grand Forks Air Force Base. Kristen spent the first year at the base as a GIS contractor, the second as a civilian GIS specialist, and the last three in the Environmental Management Flight. She and her husband Brad Rundquist (MA 1995, Ph.D. 2000), an associate professor in the Department of Geography at the University of North Dakota, spend much of their time recreating and gardening in the summer; shivering and attending UND hockey games in the winter, and coordinating the activity schedule of their 4-year-old daughter Ella year-round.

Patricia Solís: (MA 1996 KSU, Ph.D. 2002 UIowa) is the Director of Research and Outreach for the Association of American Geographers. This year was an especially eventful one with the February birth of our second son, Bennett (yes you recognize it as my former last name!) and an international move to Panama the day after the end of the Denver meeting in April! Whew! Panama is the native country of my husband Dario, who is the Director of Research for the Technological University of Panama. Little Ben as well as our three-year-old son Trey both love the year-round sunny weather and enjoy having family close by, especially Mom telecommuting to DC out of her home office. Truly the email and Internet phones that are part of this strange phenomena we call “globalization” make such a work arrangement possible. While I now live the reality of “the annihilation of space by time,” it strikes me how very much geography still does matter: living here has afforded a unique perspective on my work with international outreach, sustainable development, careers in geography, diversity, and so much more.

Jason Sheeley: (B.S. 1995) served as project manager and co-author of a report titled "NCHRP Report 532: Effective Methods for Environmental
Justice Assessment." The report is available online http://gulliver.trb.org/publications/nchrp/nchrp_rpt_532.pdf. The National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) is funded by the Transportation Research Board of the National Academies.

Jason is currently a Geographer and Team Leader for the United States Army Corps of Engineers in Kansas City.

**Gregory Vandeberg:** (Ph.D. 2005) It has been an exciting year for my family and me in Grand Forks, ND. Our biggest surprise was on May 11 with the birth of our son, John William Vandeberg. We had been preparing to come to K-State for graduation ceremonies, when John decided that he didn’t want to wait another month before being born. My wife, Lara, is currently staying at home with John, and our daughter Anna is happy to have a new baby brother.

I am in my second year as an Assistant Professor in the Geography Department at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks. Other K-State alumni in the Department include Brad Rundquist, who is an Associate Professor, and Enru Wang, who is a Visiting Professor. Johnny (JC) Coomansingh, another K-State alumnus, is an Assistant Professor at nearby Minot State University where he is shaking things up with his wild Caribbean ways. Johnny gave a presentation at our annual GTU banquet this past October, and I returned the favor by giving a presentation at Minot State. Jeff VanLooy, another K-State alumnus, grew up in Grand Forks and harasses JC and me for trying to take over his state.

Speaking of North Dakota, it has been quite a change in weather and landscape for us, having moved here from Bozeman, Montana. The Grand Forks area is very flat since this is a former glacial lake basin, and the winter temperatures are much colder than the balmy mostly above zero temps of Kansas and Montana. We try to enjoy the winters by doing lots of skating and cross-country skiing. In addition, we discovered that the western part of the state has a really varied landscape as evidenced in the badlands of Theodore Roosevelt National Park. We spent a week this summer camping and hiking amidst the bison, elk and wild horses in the park.

**Kay E. Weller:** (MA 1990) I have successfully implemented a course called the Geography of Sport at the University of Northern Iowa. It has generated interest in our department from students that otherwise would elect to take only those courses that are a part of the Liberal Arts Core. We expect to begin offering it on a regular rotation of upper division courses.

My research continues to focus on the African American colonies settled in Kansas during reconstruction.

Ray McDonald, my husband and alum of the KSU Department of Geography, works as the IT Coordinator for Buchanan County, Iowa. My son Phil Weller is frequently on the sidelines of various KSU sports as a cameraman for Metro Sports, Fox or ESPN.

**Eric White:** (MA 1995) Big news in the White house is as follows: Shirly and I have upgraded the family with a second golden retriever. She (the dog, not Shirly) likes to eat the paint off our walls. Good thing she's only two feet tall. We were fortunate enough to visit Peru, England and France this year. We've still got the travel bug. I'm still working for Trimble. I've accepted a GM position at a subsidiary in Texas. We're moving from San Francisco to Dallas in January. Hello hot and humid, please be kind to us. Anybody know a good K-State hang-out in Dallas? I hope all is well at the ole department.

**Ben and Kortney White:** (MA 2004) Life has been a whirlwind since I graduated with an MA in May 2004. In September of 04, I moved to Salt Lake City where I took a job at Azteca Systems Ltd., a small software company whose main product is an asset
management extension to ESRI GIS packages. In January 05, yet another GISSAL Lab romance came to a head when I married Kortney Steinhurst (BS 05). When we found out that Kortney was pregnant, we decided that a move was necessary so that we could be closer to our families in Kansas. I took a job with the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) in Saint Louis, Missouri as a Geospatial Analyst and began working in August. Our son Jaden was born on October 27th, happy and healthy.

Between the moves, getting married, and the baby, we have had our hands full but we are enjoying ourselves and doing very well.

ANNOUNCING A NEW SCHOLARSHIP!

Dr. Richard A. Marston and his family have established a scholarship for geography graduate students titled the Rumsey Bissell Marston Scholarship to support Graduate Student Field Work in Physical/Environmental Geography. Rumsey Bissell Marston (1893-1964) was a lifelong educator who attributed his achievements to hard work, a positive outlook, self-confidence, and effective mentoring.

The scholarship is available to students pursuing a graduate degree in geography at K-State that involves a significant component of fieldwork in physical or environmental geography. Preferably, the project should explore one of the following two themes: 1) separate human effects on the environment from changes that would have occurred without human interference; 2) explain the integration between geomorphology and other biophysical processes. A thesis/dissertation proposal, approved by the student's committee, shall be the basis for judging applications along with a letter from the student.

The deadline for submitting proposals for the RBM Scholarship is March 1st. The Geography Graduate Program Committee will judge the applications. Recipients receive a cash award, a framed certificate, and have their names engraved on a plaque that is displayed in the department.

Donations are accepted to help support the RBM Scholarship.

Back Row: Chuck Martin, Steve White, Doug Goodin, Huber Self, Chuck Bussing, John Harrington, Middle Row: Bernie Schmidt, Steve Stover, Jeff Smith, Shawn Hutchinson, Max Lu, Duane Nellis, Front Row: Laura Moley, Lisa Harrington, Kevin Blake, Dave Kromm, Bimal Paul, Dick Marston Absent: Karen De Bres and Lisa Percival
The “Alumni News” section grew tremendously this year!! Thank you very much for your emails, news articles, websites, and pictures. Sorry we couldn’t use all the pictures do to space.

Let’s hear from you again next year.  

Thank you!

| Name: ____________________________ | Occupation: ____________________________ |
| Mailing Address: __________________ | Title: _________________________________ |
| _________________________________ | Employer: _____________________________ |
| E-mail Address: __________________ | Other: _________________________________ |

| Year Graduated: __________________ | Degree: __________________________________ |
| Year Graduated: __________________ | Degree: __________________________________ |
| Year Graduated: __________________ | Degree: __________________________________ |

Other information or comments of interest for the next *Alumni Newsletter*:
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Please return this form to:

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