Welcome to our 2010 *K-State Geography Alumni Newsletter*, an opportunity for us to share with you...our alumni and friends...the news of the past year. We have a lot to be proud about, past and present. Our faculty and students have enjoyed some remarkable success in 2009, even as everyone at K-State adjusts to budget cuts for this year and beyond. 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. Our graduates are taking their place in business, industry, government, and academia. Our students have been selected for a remarkable array of awards outside the department as well as the annual departmental awards that are presented during our annual Spring GTU/Geography Banquet. You will read about some of the highlights in the pages that follow.

Regarding personnel, long-time faculty member Dr. Karen De Bres married John Cole of Nottingham, England. Karen decided to retire, having just been promoted to professor, and has moved permanently to the U.K. We miss her cheerful disposition around the department (and the holiday parties at her home!) but wish her and John the best. In another important development, Dr. Steve White stepped-down as Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences after 8 years and has returned to the Department of Geography on a part-time basis. Welcome back!

K-State Geography Alumni are supporting the department at an unprecedented level. Dr. Kay Weller (M.A. Geography, 1990) and Ray McDonald (M.A. Geography, 1994) have established the "K-State Geography Alumni Fund" to support students in the Department of Geography. More on that later in the Newsletter. Jason Sheelely has continued to organize a Geography Career Day in the spring to help our students secure jobs, internships, and otherwise gain experience in preparing resumes and conducting interviews.

We have a record 99 students currently majoring in Geography (BA + BS) in Fall 2009 as well as a record number of graduate students (18 MA + 14 PhD + 13 ABD = 45). Fall 2009 enrollment in Geography classes reached an all-time record (for one semester) of 2289, and this was accomplished with two faculty on sabbatical leave. Having lost 1.55 faculty positions and with two faculty on sabbatical leave, we have found ways to make certain students are accommodated in a fair way.

We now have 18 students who have completed the Ph.D. in Geography at K-State since our first graduate in 2000. This is excellent. Several others should finish in 2010. 37 students have completed the Graduate Certificate in GIScience, including students from 10 departments in four colleges. I have been told this makes it the largest graduate certificate program at K-State.
One tenure-track faculty member already has published 23 refereed journal articles and three faculty have published in the prestigious Proceedings of the National Academy of Science (PNAS). One faculty member had three refereed journal articles accepted for publication in a two-week period alone. K-State Geography faculty were involved in $13.4 million in research grants at some time during 2009, $2.356 of which is housed in Geography; the remainder is housed in other departments with whom we collaborate. Of course, much of the funding supports students.

Teaching and research labs in Geography have been significantly upgraded with computers, analytical equipment, and furnishings: GIS/Remote Sensing Teaching Lab, Remote Sensing Lab, Environmental Geography Teaching Lab, and the new Paleoenvironmental Research/Teaching Lab.

We feel like we are thriving, even during these tough budget times. Our faculty are working hard and maintaining high productivity. We are placing our students in a position where they can succeed. We have challenges, like everybody else, but we are seeking solutions and trying to move forward.

I am always grateful to our alumni, parents, students, and friends for the gifts that support our students and other department needs. Our own faculty give donations to fully fund scholarships when funds otherwise fall short. Your gifts make a difference and provide truly excellent educational opportunities. We are funding students at a higher rate (for travel, and as GTAs/GRAs) than at any time in the past. I always welcome your comments about the department and K-State. When you are visiting campus, please stop by Seaton Hall and say hello.

Thanks for all you do for K-State Geography!

Congratulations to Duane Nellis: 17th President of University of Idaho

M. Duane Nellis began serving as the University of Idaho's 17th President on 1 July 2009. Previously, Duane had served Kansas State University in several capacities: for 5 years as Provost and Senior Vice President, 3.5 years as Associate Dean in the College of Arts & Sciences, and 3.5 years as Professor and Head of the Department of Geography. Duane began his career at K-State in Fall 1980 as an Assistant Professor in Geography. Former A&S Dean, Bill Stamey, called Duane Nellis the finest hire he ever made during his time as dean. Duane spent 22 of the first 29 years of his career at K-State. We will miss him dearly at K-State but know he was destined to lead a university with his aptitude for leadership and enthusiastic support for the mission of land grant universities.

Faculty News

Kevin Blake: Happy new year to all Wildcat geographers! This past spring I enjoyed teaching the GEOG 770 seminar, Perception of the Environment, for the first time in six years. In the spring I also taught Mountain Geography (GEOG 600). From something like seven students the first time I taught it five years ago, Mountain Geography now draws an enrollment of forty-five students. Ryan Bergstrom, a PhD Candidate in our department, helped in that course by giving several engaging talks on his home ground of Montana. This past fall I taught World Regional Geography (GEOG 100) and a graduate seminar, Western Landscapes. My travels this year ranged northward to Winnipeg, Manitoba, westward to Las Vegas and Death Valley National Park, eastward to the Outer Banks of North Carolina, and southward … all the way to Wichita for a postcard show. (Among other interests, I collect postcards of the Colorado Fourteeners.) Amidst these trips were several outings to Colorado for mountain symbolism research, plus another trip to Arizona for a Zane
Grey’s West Society convention. Two of my favorite hikes this past year were to the top of Angels Landing, a monolith towering above the Virgin River in Zion National Park, Utah, and to Zane Grey Arch, a massive natural sandstone arch in the remote backcountry of the Escalante River region near Lake Powell in Utah. I look forward to integrating my latest western experiences and newly acquired knowledge into my Geography of the American West course in spring 2010. For those former students who occasionally write me or drop by the department, please remember that I always enjoy hearing from you.

Marcellus Caldas: I am an assistant professor in my second year at KSU. I am an environmental geographer with more than 10 years of experience in research in the Brazilian Amazon region. During all these years I have coordinated many fieldwork expeditions to the Amazon involving undergraduates and graduates students as well as faculty members from Michigan State University, University of Florida and Kansas State University. I am a native of the Brazilian Amazon, where I lived until moving to Brasilia to pursue a Bachelors degree in economics. After that my career centered on agricultural economics in which I hold a Master and Ph.D. Also, it was while working on my agricultural economics Ph.D. that I decided to pursue a Ph.D. in Geography.

In the fall of 2009, I taught GIS and Geography of South America. Being a native of South America allowed me to design a Geography of South America course that stimulated KSU students to explore the dynamic region of South America from a geographic, economic and political perspective. It was the second time that this course was offered in Geography. This new course brought together thirty-eight students from multiple disciplines and the high demand for this course estimated the development of a Study Abroad in South America. I and two other professors (one from Biology and the other from English) will lead a Study Abroad in the Brazilian Amazon. This new course titled Development, Environment and Creative Writing in the Brazilian Rainforest will explore how people live in the Brazilian Amazon region and will focus on reconciling regional economic development with environmental sustainability. Through various field excursions, readings, lectures, and discussions the students will consider how the need of local people can be met while at the same time protecting a global resource, the Amazon rainforest.

In addition to my teaching duties, I continue with my research program addressing land cover and land use change in the Brazilian Amazon. I have been very active in publishing in a wide range of journals. My recent publications in 2009 include: Settlement formation and land cover and land use change: a case study in the Brazilian Amazon (Journal of Latin American Geography); Deforestation and Small Holders in Amazonia (a NASA book titled Amazonia and Global Change); Doing it for themselves: Direct Action Land Reform in the Brazilian Amazon (World Development); Saying Goodbye to the Amazonian Forest: Ranching and the New Global Range (GeoForum); Can Protected Areas Protect the Amazon? (Proceedings of National Academy of Science).

Melinda Daniels: Hello Kansas State Geographers! My first year in Kansas has been a productive and happy one. I taught Environmental Geography I, Fluvial Geomorphology and World Regional Geography, developed a new on-line distance education course called Earth System Geography, published two papers, submitted several grant applications, and began advising my first KSU graduate student. Oh – and I had a baby, too! My husband, Rob Daniels, and I welcomed our second child, Lily Mae, on April 10, 2009. She has now joined her older brother, Logan, at the K-State Center for Child Development, where they both thrive during the weekdays while Mom and Dad are at work.

In addition to my NSF funded research on large river side channels, in January of 2010 I will begin two new projects on the Kansas River funded by the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks. The first will examine the geomorphological and ecological effects of in-channel sand dredging operations in the Kansas River, including the reach right next to Manhattan. My role in the second project will focus on the geomorphic effects of the Bowersock hydroelectric dam near Lawrence. I also received a small pilot grant from KSU to collect some preliminary data on small tributary confluences with the Kansas River. Finally, Dr.
Marston and I are working together to start integrating geomorphologic research into the ongoing hydrology and stream ecology studies out at the Konza Prairie.

I am particularly pleased that my role as a graduate adviser is growing. My first KSU graduate student, Lisa Hook, and I are working closely with the US Army Corps of Engineers to identify the historical extent of side channels on a large stretch of the Missouri River.

**Doug Goodin:** 2009 was a productive year. Working with colleagues at KSU, Colorado State and the University of Georgia, I made significant progress on a USDA funded project to understand the effects of annual burning in the Flint Hills on air quality in surrounding metropolitan areas. This project has taken on greater importance now that new EPA regulations for air quality have been enacted. General interest in the topic is very high on-campus and within the state environmental regulatory community, and I am hoping that this will become an ongoing research and application effort. Graduate students Rhett Mohler and Roy Sando have been important contributors to this effort. I have also begun a new project in the Ukraine, aimed at mapping the presence and extent of a select group of especially dangerous pathogens. This project promises to be especially interesting, and will capitalize on the long and excellent data records available in that country. I am excited about the prospects, and about traveling to Ukraine several times over the next year. My work in Paraguay and Brazil continues. We now have a much better understanding of landscape factors that influence the spatial distribution of hantavirus in the Atlantic Forest. My work resulted in five publications this year, with two more pending.

On a personal note, I welcomed a new canine addition to my household this spring; Kaya, a female Alaskan Malamute. It’s fun to have a dog in the house, however it also means rising at the crack of dawn for the morning walk, something I am still getting used to. She seems to show a marked propensity for chewing up books and remote controls, so I have also had to learn not to leave either of these where they can be reached. I am still active in rowing, and am looking forward to getting back on the water as soon as spring arrives. I have not climbed much lately, but am looking to get on some rock this spring, also. I am also organizing a back-packing trip to Utah, to visit some of my favorite Anasazi sites.

**John Harrington:** Day 353 - Warsaw. I am about to board Polish Airlines Flight 1 to Chicago (clearly there must be a good joke there). After attending the UN Climate Conference in Copenhagen, I am dragging my body back home to Kansas. Reflecting on 2009; it has been a good year for this workaholic. Ten new publications have happened since I last wrote for this annual newsletter and five new grants have been obtained. I am pleased to now have a manuscript in Climatic Change [based on Trina Frank’s MA Thesis] and an article in Physical Geography on misconceptions and climate literacy. Now my ideas, about how the rain shadow concept does not apply to the Colorado Rocky Mountains, are in the peer-reviewed literature. Two new grants were funded to help move the Kansas Geographic Alliance forward; I coordinate that K-12 teacher-oriented effort for Kansas. But the big news regarding grants is a new five year effort funded by NSF to address renewable energy and climate change. My contributions will focus on the climate impacts aspects of the project. I again taught the three classes I have become accustomed to teaching each year: Climatology, Human Dimensions of Global Change, and the seminar on geographic thought for graduate students. I am gratified by the comments students provide regarding my teaching efforts. Two additional seminars, one on The Local Expression of Global Change and the other on The Impacts of Climate Change, rounded out a busy year of instructional activity. It was a treat for the students in the ‘Local Expression’ seminar to have Nobel Prize winner, Dr. Chuck Rice [KSU Agronomy], contribute to the class. I continue to enjoy working with a considerable number of graduate students and I am very pleased that my Senegalese doctoral student, Ramatoulaye Ndaiye, was able to defend her dissertation work and graduate in December. Day 233 had me presenting on The Climate of the Central North American Grasslands to a K-State campus audience; I was very pleased to see the good turnout of faculty colleagues from across campus. Day 262 had me hosting the annual Kansas Geography Conference and we had a special treat with Dr. Sarah Bednarz, from Texas A&M,
sharing her knowledge about teaching geographic concepts.

Day 43 had me giving an invited presentation on the value of GIScience for mapping, measuring, and monitoring change at the Great Green Wall Symposium in Dakar, Senegal. I presented to the gathering at the International Human Dimensions Programme meeting on methods for coupling human and natural systems in Bonn, Germany, on Day 118. Travels stateside had me in Tempe, AZ for LTER meetings on Days 49-50, in Washington DC for two meetings on Days 55-58, in Vegas for the AAG Meetings on Days 81-85 [that made 34 consecutive years of attending the annual AAG meeting and 32 years in a row that I’ve presented]. I went to Harvard Forest on Days 91-92 and I was in Tempe again on Days 110-111 for more LTER meetings. A trip to Washington, DC for the National Geographic Bee finals happened on Days 138-140. The annual summer getaway [to our place in Bay Center, WA] happened during July and the first half of August. I traveled to Estes Park, CO, for the LTER All Scientists Meeting on Days 256-259 and then to the regional AAG in Logan, UT, on Days 268-270. Additional fall semester travels had me at the Applied Geography Conference on Days 301-303 and at NSF to serve on a review panel during Days 315-318. Perhaps you now better understand why I am dragging my body back to Kansas. A spring 2010 sabbatical will provide a welcome break from part of the normal workaholic routine.

One nice thing about traveling is that it provides time to either grade student papers, read those recent journal articles, crack open a good book, or just reflect on the nature of things. That reflection had me using Google to learn more about the concept of ‘political anorexia.’ It may have been first used about 15 years ago in California. I think that ‘political anorexia’ is a reasonable diagnosis for what has become the result of 30 years of reducing big government [and taxes] and services; and then having those of us who are employed by the government ‘doing more for less.’

Books I really liked include: Fixing Climate by Wallace Broecker and What’s The Worst That Could Happen by Greg Cravins. Both would help anyone concerned with global climate change to get a better handle on the nature of things. James Lovelock’s most recent book, The Revenge of Gaia, was an interesting and quick read; now over 90, Lovelock does not hold back his opinions. And, I really enjoyed reading Malcolm Gladwell’s books: Tipping Points, Outliers, and Blink.

I continue to communicate to whomever will listen about the pace and magnitude of on-going global change [it is not just climate change with 6.7 billion of us human consumers]. Each year I grow more concerned that the existing structures we have in place [and those structures include both physical infrastructure that may have a design life of several decades and social, economic, and political systems that change at a seemingly glacial pace] are not going to be able to help us react fast enough as the global system changes very rapidly all around us. There is a Chinese proverb/curse, ‘may you live in interesting times.’ Unfortunately, the generations to come will have to deal with some very interesting challenges on a planet with where consumption is growing a lot faster than our ability to extract resources.

**Lisa Harrington:** I’ve had another busy year in 2009. In spite of that, I don’t feel like there’s a whole lot to say as an update. I’ve traveled quite a bit, both for professional and personal reasons – professional trips took me to the Washington, DC, area; Las Vegas for the AAG meeting; Logan, Utah, for the regional AAG meeting – I was the main driver for the van of students (making it to Logan in one day); San Diego and St. Paul for AAG officers meetings; several trips to Oregon to check on my mom, as well as the annual stay at our place in southwest Washington; and – the biggie this year – a trip to Slovenia for a meeting of the IGU Commission on Rural Sustainability. Great country!

I’ve also been busy with a number of grad committees. The ‘biggest’ things for me as an advisor this year were completion of Chris Laingen’s dissertation (with the good news of his tenure-track job at Eastern Illinois U) and completion of Jake George’s thesis.

The big thing in August was moving Ian into a dorm here on campus. He was 3 years old when we moved here!!! Ian has adjusted pretty well to dorm life – although he comes home every weekend (laundry and weekend home-cooking), he’s decided he likes staying in the dorm Friday nights so he can participate in floor game night. On weekends he
trudges through the house complaining about being bored. (Come to think of it, he did that before starting college, too.) Colin is still in high school, but is now a junior. And also bored.

Unfortunately, I haven’t had the dogs out for agility competition for a year – just too busy. So if Seamus could talk, he’d probably complain about being bored, too. Wolf is now registered as a therapy dog, but he hasn’t made any ‘therapy’ visits yet. He has his paws full with providing stress relief at home. We still have five (!) cats – two inherited from Mary Dobbs, one taken in when my brother moved and couldn’t keep all his cats, and two that we had prior to those three additions.

From the perspective of finals week, as I write this, it looks like I won’t lack for activities in 2010. Best wishes to all of you for the year.

Shawn Hutchinson: Une Année Sabbatique en France - For the 2009-2010 academic year, my family and I have been living, working, and studying in Toulouse, France as we enjoy a nine-month sabbatical leave from Kansas State University. Stacy, an associate professor of Biological & Agricultural Engineering, and I are working at Ecole Supérieure d’Agriculture de Purpan, or just Purpan for short. Our children, Mitchell (age 8) and Marleigh (age 6) are attending French public elementary school. The objective of our leave is to enhance our understanding of the French education system, increase our knowledge of international natural resource management, and simply experience France (and as much of Europe as possible) to the fullest.

The city of Toulouse is located in southwestern France along the Garonne River in the Midi-Pyrenees region, almost equidistant from the Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea. On clear days, you can see the Pyrenees Mountain range in the distance. With a city population of approximately 500,000 and a metro population of approximately 1 million people, Toulouse is the fifth largest population center in the country. Toulouse may be best known today as the home of Airbus and their championship rugby team, Stade Toulousain. Our apartment (all 600 ft² of it) is located in the St. Cyprien neighborhood, which is just across the river from the historic old city center.

It is a wonderful area with a green market, several boulangeries, library, a couple of grocery stores, lots of restaurants and a great park (Prairie des Filtres), where the kids can run and play. At Purpan, Stacy and I are part of the Remote Sensing and Territorial Management Laboratory which is headed by our sabbatical host Dr. Michel Gay. I have been working with Dr. Gay on a project titled “GEOWine” where we are quantifying the impact of place on the quality of wine production (i.e., terroir) in a nearby appellation. Stacy is collaborating with Purpan colleague Jean-Phillipe Denux and the French equivalent of the USGS on the “Trans-Polar” project that is assessing the type and magnitude of groundwater pollution in an agricultural watershed south of Toulouse. We are also doing a bit of teaching, including English language classes (scientific discussions with Purpan students in English and familiarizing students to typical U.S. style lecturing) and guest lectures in natural resource management, general agriculture, and GIS courses. In addition, we (Stacy more than I) are also involved with the joint KSU-Purpan Agricultural Resources and Environmental Management (AREM) program, which includes a capstone course this fall. I think the AREM program would be of interest to a number of geographers and would encourage anyone who wants to know more to contact me. Besides these duties at Purpan, we are also working on several ongoing funded research projects at Kansas State University and are writing several manuscripts and book chapters for publication.

Mitchell and Marleigh are attending école primaire (elementary school) at Etienne Billieres. They are currently in the same classroom, called CLIN (acronym unknown). This is a special class for foreign children to teach them the French language and indoctrinate them to the French style of learning. As they continue to study French, they will be integrated more and more into their regular first grade (Marleigh) and third grade (Mitch) classrooms. Already both kids are spending about half of each day outside of CLIN. The kids’ school day starts at 8:45 a.m., they have a lunch break from 11:30 to 1:30 p.m., and the school day ends at 4:20 p.m. Thankfully for working parents like Shawn and me, there is a lunch and after school program sponsored by the city. Both children have absorbed French like a sponge and can speak and understand
it quite well after only a few months. Our son Mitch sounds like a real Frenchman and is often complimented on his accent when ordering food in restaurants – even by notorious Parisian waiters!

Over the last three months, practically everyday has presented a new adventure or challenge. Many of these lessons were the result of living in a foreign country, many of them were the result of living in a large city, and some are, well, just life. By far the biggest challenge we face is communication. Though we did prepare for our leave by studying French, both at K-State and using computer programs, either Stacy or I invested enough time in that effort as we believed that most people would speak at least a little English. While this assumption is largely true in countries like Germany and Italy, the vast majority of people in France communicate using French almost exclusively. Fortunately for Stacy and me, most of our Purpan colleagues speak English quite well, but our kids are immersed in French all day as their teachers and young friends are Francophone. Outside of the university environment, every trip to the grocery, bank, library, city government, auto mechanic, prefecture (local national government office), doctor, hospital, restaurant, etc., quickly becomes an interesting mix of our poor French, hopefully a little bit of English, lots of hand gestures, and many times living with the consequences of not being able to adequately communicate our needs. Generally, we are able to find some humor in these situations but each day underscores for us the importance of having competence, if not fluency, in a second language – for us and our children.

While in France we have also had the opportunity to travel quite a bit across Europe. Every 6 six weeks, the kids have a two week school break and we head out of Toulouse in the used Citroën Saxo we purchased after arriving in country. The Saxo is capable of transporting all four of us with one medium sized suitcase, but little more. Outside of France, we have traveled to cities/places in Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Italy, Spain, Lichtenstein, Monaco, Vatican City, and Andorra. We spent Christmas this year skiing in the spectacular French Alps near the small town of Vallouise, the same site where the British have their annual alpine skiing championship.

We depart for Kansas on June 1 of this year but are looking forward to making the most of our remaining time in France. If you want to keep track of us and see a few photos, I am trying to keep an up-to-date family blog that documents our daily adventures (www.shawnhutchinson.blogspot.com). And, every now and then, we get the kids to jot down their thoughts on their own blogs (linked from mine).

Max Lu: Being the alumni coordinator in the department, I have had the fun of working with some of you in the last year. It has been a rewarding experience. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jason Sheeley for his leadership and enthusiasm as chair of the Alumni Board in the last three years. He did a fantastic job. The annual Geography Career Day he organizes has been great for our students to learn about the job market and actually get jobs! Jason himself has hired several of our recent graduates. So on behalf of our students, thank you so much for all the help and encouragement. We are looking forward to the third Career Day in February 2010. Jason stepped down as the chair in June 2009 and passed his baton to Will Breitkreutz. Will has already successfully organized and presided over his first Alumni Board annual meeting. I look forward to working with him in the next few years. It has been customary to report our travels to “exotic” locations in the newsletter. Well, many of us were in Las Vegas for the AAG meeting. Having not seen enough of the southwestern United States, I decided to drive there. The natural landscape along the way was absolutely amazing. Of course, seeing all the cultural landscapes in Vegas was interesting too. Now I can brag about having visited both famous strips (Branson last year). The other memorable trip is to the Ellis Island while in New York City for a conference in November. I had visited the Liberty Island before but not to this little early point of entry for immigrants to the United States. There was no need for me to look things up about my ancestors because I am the first immigrant in my family. But for population geographers like me, the Peopling of America exhibit there is a must-see.

Richard Marston: Fall 2009 was the beginning of my 30th year as a professor, 5th at K-State. I feel fortunate to have worked with so many outstanding
faculty and students over the years, as well as having travelled to some remarkable places in North America, South America, Europe, and Asia. In 2009 I enjoyed wonderful work-related travel to San Francisco, New York City, Las Vegas, and Milwaukee. Every geographer should visit the American Geographical Society Library at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. The AGS Library was moved from New York City to UW-Milwaukee in 1978. The AGS Library presently consists of well over one million items, and includes maps, atlases, books, journals, pamphlets, photographs, slides, Landsat images, and digital spatial data. The scope of its collection is worldwide. Currently, the AGS Library is also the home of the archives of the Association of American Geographers, and an affiliate member of the U.S. Geological Survey’s Earth Science Information Center (ESIC) network and its Natural Science Network consortium.

My wife, Linda, is officially "in remission" for cancer. She continues to work in Hale Library. Our son, Bryce, is working toward completion of his master’s degree in Geography at UN-Omaha. Our daughter, Brooke, is finishing her sophomore year at CU-Boulder, majoring in music (oboe performance) and added a minor in geography (!). Our wonder dog, Kit (border collie-Australian sheep dog mix) continues to learn new tricks, entertain house guests, and terrorize the backyard squirrels. Linda and I enjoyed a summer driving trip to upper Michigan where Brooke was participating in a month-long music festival. Earlier in the summer I met Bryce in Denver to explore the Mount Evans area and to watch some Colorado Rockies baseball games at Coors Field. Bryce was working for the U.S. Forest Service in Wyoming as a hydrologic technician. I attended two great concerts on the K-State campus: Big Bad Voodoo Daddy, and Rain--Tribute to the Beatles. I joined the Manhattan Rotary Club in 2009 and am enjoying their activities. Best wishes to you in 2010!

Chuck Martin: A busy and successful year is coming to a close for me, my 20th (!!!) at Kansas State University. Professionally, my research continues to focus on the storage and movement of heavy metals in the Lahn River of central Germany. I learned a few weeks ago that I have been awarded a 3-month research fellowship from the Humboldt Foundation to return to Germany in Summer 2010 to examine recent river activity and heavy metal storage in a mined tributary to the Lahn River. That work will commence as soon as the spring semester concludes. I continue to serve as Director of the Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences Secondary Major. We have weathered the terrible budget situation in the state thus far, but I fear the program may suffer some substantial budget cuts in the next fiscal year. A shame given that K-State has just begun to implement many sustainable practices on campus. I continue to teach Environmental Geography 1, Geography of Kansas, Human Impact on the Environment, and Geographic Research Methods, and serve as the Lead Undergraduate Advisor in the department. This past May I was thrilled to receive the Presidential Award for Outstanding Undergraduate Advising at K-State, an honor accorded one faculty member each year in recognition of her/his work with undergraduate students.

The personal news for the year is dominated by growing children and travel. Christine (now 11) is in the middle of her last year of elementary school. She and I made a leisurely drive to Portland, Maine, this past summer to see family members, visiting St. Louis, Chicago, Niagara Falls, and Boston along the way. While we were viewing the eastern half of America by car, Nicholas (now 15 and taller than his father) and Sabine spent three weeks in Germany, highlighted by a visit to Berlin. Fall brought soccer for both kids, Christine on her traveling club team and Nicholas as a JV/Varsity member of the high school team. Nicholas talks of becoming an engineer ("no way will I become a geographer or a geologist", he has announced) while Christine relishes her final year in elementary school and looks forward to the “different subjects and different teachers” offered next year in middle school. To say that they keep Sabine and me on our toes is an understatement. Sabine continues to work as Coordinator for the Technical Assistance to Brownfields program at the Center for Hazardous Substance Research on campus. The work takes her to workshops and conferences across the country where she interacts with community and government leaders engaged in the redevelopment of areas impacted by hazardous substances.
Kendra: McLauchlan: Life continues to roll along at breakneck pace. My husband, Joe Craine, continues his temporary appointment in the biology department at KSU. He enjoys his work at Konza Prairie. Our children, Micah and Isabel, are quite delightful. It's true— they do grow fast! We attended the annual AAG conference in Las Vegas in March 2009, and I'm looking forward to the conference in Washington DC this coming spring.

My undergraduate and graduate students continue to excel. The Paleoenvironmental Lab was completed in February 2009. Check it out at [http://www.k-state.edu/paleoenvironment/](http://www.k-state.edu/paleoenvironment/). Julie Commerford is making great progress on her thesis project. With help from two undergraduate students, she conducted vegetation surveys and collected sediment from 20 more ponds in the Flint Hills of Kansas this past summer. She was out there even on the days over 100F—field work knows no temperature limit! She has completed her GIS work, and she will be calculating the first pollen productivity estimates for grassland plants in North America in the next few months.

My other graduate student, Eli Martinson, is conducting species distribution modeling of woody plants on the Great Plains for his M.A. thesis. This builds on our Biogeography class project, where he took a leadership role. I am serving on 3 graduate student committees at KSU and one at KU. Both of my NSF-funded projects are producing interesting results. I am the new GTU faculty advisor as well. The students have so much energy and talent.

Bimal Paul: The year 2009 was not that much different from the past couple of years. Like last year, I was not able to visit my native Bangladesh in 2009. However, I did visit England in June, Puerto Rico in October, and Nepal in December. I really enjoyed these excursions, particularly Nepal. From Katmandu I went to Pokhora, a popular tourist site in western Nepal. There I spent one night in a lodge located at a very high elevation, directly facing the fishtail peak of the Annapurna Ranges. I saw the sunrise the following morning and it was spectacular—truly a once in a lifetime experience! I visited several caves, temples, stupas, traditional markets, and enjoyed Nepalese food, which is not much different from Bangladeshi food. In addition to delivering a key-note address at an international conference on disasters, I gave a special seminar presentation for the Central Department of Geography, Tribhuvan University at Kirtipur, Katmandu.

Looking back, I suspect I read and wrote much more in 2009 than in any previous year. I reviewed 27 journal manuscripts, 53 book chapters, and seven grant proposals. I wrote eight journal manuscripts and three book chapters. Two of these have already been published, and the others have been either accepted for publication or under review. Like last year, I participated in a one-hour long Bengali-language program for the Voice of America (VOA) broadcast discussing the impacts of climate change on the Bangladesh environment and its economy. I also presented seven papers at professional meetings held in the United States and abroad. In 2009, I had four papers published in refereed journals; five other manuscripts have been accepted for future publication. I am very pleased to report that Vicki, one of my Ph.D. advisees, successfully defended her dissertation in November. My three other Ph.D. advisees (Mitch, Sumo, and Sohini) also presented their doctoral proposals in 2009. I expect all three students will defend their dissertations sometime in 2010.

On family front, our eldest daughter Anjana has been working full-time with US Celluler for the last two years. In December 2009, she received her second undergraduate degree, this one in Management; her first degree from K-State was in Marketing. Our younger daughter, Archana, will join nursing program at KU in the Fall 2010. Our son Rahul has been accepted into the engineering program at K-State. Anjali, my wife, has been extremely busy with her daycare.

Jeff Smith: Happy New Year and I hope 2010 is brings you joy, peace, and contentment. I spent most of 2009 writing on my major research project
in Zacatecas, Mexico. The project looks at the differing types of migrants who leave rural Mexico in search of a better life abroad. Given the deep recession the U.S. and Mexico are enduring it has been a great challenge to make ends meet for many of the families I have been interacting with.

In addition to my ongoing research I continue to teach many of the same introductory courses. I had a wonderful group of students in both my GEOG 201 and 620 classes during Spring 2009. They rejuvenated my enthusiasm for teaching and I am greatly indebted to them. I was pleased that some of my former students stopped by to see me. As I’ve always said... if you find yourself on the K-State campus please stop by and say hello!

Steve White Comes Home: On a very positive note, I am very, very happy to have the opportunity to join my colleagues in the Department of Geography again. Thankfully, some of them look even more mature than I remembered. However, word has it that I am the most senior faculty member. I completed a half-year sabbatical leave in December. Upon the completion of my sabbatical leave, I signed off on a phased retirement agreement. My responsibilities include reviving my old course – The Geography of the USA. In addition, I plan to do some department head workshops for new department heads. Although I am no longer a dean, I will continue to maintain some important contacts with our College of Arts and Sciences alumni.

I readily admit that I am confronting a bit of a time warp. I have noted that some things are very different. We don’t draw maps by hand anymore! We don’t use as much chalk either. Some geographers have been very generous with their advice. Susan has a much better grasp of the technology than me. – However, I do expect to be going full bore in the classroom. I am slowly gaining momentum with respect to the application of technology in the classroom.

Both Susan and I are enjoying our phased retirement opportunities. Susan continues to work in Bob Dole Hall as a project coordinator for the Kansas Regents Network. Now that both of us are on phased retirement contracts we have some flexibility to self-actualize.

Over the past year, we have had some very good visits with our grandsons in St. Louis (Jaden and Dominic) as well as our granddaughters (Ellie and Mattie) in Atherton, California. Susan and I are very pleased that both of our kids (Ben and Eric) have continued their careers in the geoscience professions. Jaden has already taken a strong interest in his USA jig saw puzzle. Who says you can’t go home!

Selected Faculty Accomplishments

Kevin Blake:
- Presented “Iconic Colorado Fourteeners in the Place Imagery of the Mountainous West” at the AAG meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada.
- Elected vice-president of the Zane Grey’s West Society (zgws.org).
- Recognized as an outstanding faculty member by the Alpha Delta Pi sorority at K-State.

Marcellus Caldas:
- Settlement formation and land cover and land use change: a case study in the Brazilian Amazon (Journal of Latin American Geography).
- Deforestation and Small Holders in Amazonia (a NASA book titled *Amazonia and Global Change*).
- Doing it for themselves: Direct Action Land Reform in the Brazilian Amazon (*World Development*).
Saying Goodbye to the Amazonian Forest: Ranching and the New Global Range (GeoForum); Can Protected Areas Protect the Amazon? (Proceedings of National Academy of Science).

Melinda Daniels:
- Co-PI on two successful grant applications to the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks: 1) Sand Dredging Effects on Fishes and Fish Habitat in the Kansas River, $181,983, and 2) Seasonal Fish Assemblages and Habitat Effects near Bowersock Dam: Implications for Fish Passage, $195,249.
- Appointed to the AAG Geomorphology Specialty Group awards committee.
- Published two peer-reviewed journal articles (in The Middle States Geographer and Geomorphology), both co-authored with graduate students.

Doug Goodin:
- Invited speaker at Virus Laboratory Symposium, Manaus, Brazil, October 2010.
- Presented: Community diversity, landscape structure, and the presence of hantavirus in Eastern Paraguay, at the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers.

John Harrington:
- I coordinate the Kansas Geographic Alliance and the state-level Geographic Bee.
- A co-authored publication in Climatic Change.
- Sole-authored publications in Physical Geography and in the Journal of Contemporary Water Research & Education.

Lisa Harrington:
- Selected to serve on AAG Executive Committee, as AAG Secretary.

Shawn Hutchinson:
- Six peer-reviewed publications published or accepted in 2009, including a paper in BioScience (59(2):141-151).
- Graduate student Mike Dulin graduated in Spring 2009 after completing his thesis titled, “Identifying and Assessing Windbreaks in Ford County, Kansas using Object-based Image Analysis.”
- Consumed Bordeaux wine and duck in France, beer and sausages in Germany, and pasta and Chianti in Italy.

Max Lu:
- Completed a funded project on data development for asthma hazard mapping in Kansas, with the help of my able student, Keela Andrews.
- Three chapters from the HERO project, of which I am a co-author, are published in the book titled Sustainable Communities on a Sustainable Planet (Cambridge, 2009)
- Reappointed to the Advanced Placement Human Geography Development Committee by the College Board.
Richard Marston:
- Completed my 11th year as Co-Editor-in-Chief of the Elsevier journal, Geomorphology; handled 139 manuscripts in 2009.
- Ben Meade completed his M.A. in Geography under my supervision, authoring an excellent thesis titled "Spatial extent, timing, and cause of channel incision, Black Vermillion watershed, northeastern Kansas." Ben was hired by Environmental Resources Management (ERM) in Boston, MA.
- Three refereed journal articles accepted for publication, 8 papers/posters presented at professional meetings, external reviewer for 6 cases involving tenure and/or promotion, external reviewer for 6 manuscripts and 7 research proposals.

Chuck Martin:
- Awarded the 2009 Presidential Award for Outstanding Undergraduate Advising at Kansas State University.
- Awarded a 3-month Research Fellowship from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, Bonn, Germany, to conduct research on recent river sedimentation and heavy metal storage along the Dill River, Central Germany, June – August 2010.

Kendra McLauchlan:
- I won the Stamey Award for excellence in teaching from the KSU College of Arts and Sciences.
- Along with coauthors, I published three manuscripts in scientific journals. I submitted two more that are in review.
- I taught the first Biogeography class ever offered at KSU, as a 700-level seminar. The 6 students in this course conducted species distribution modeling about 30 Great Plains plant species, and I led the writing of a manuscript that is in review.

Bimal Paul:
- Associated with a U.S. Department of Education (DOE) Title VI Grant to develop undergraduate minor in South Asia at K-State.
- Awarded a Certificate in recognition of dedication to international education at Kansas State University by Office of the International Programs, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, 2009.

Jeffrey Smith:
- I had an article and book chapter published related to my research in Mexico.
- I continued field work in rural Mexico.
- I began a new research project looking at irrigation practices in the highlands of Peru.

Emeritus News:

Chuck Bussing: In mid-March we set off for the AAG convention in Las Vegas, an opportunity to meet with old friends and attend a few papers. The highlight of the visit was a field trip to Death Valley National Park.

We had put an Alaska visit on the back burner until we had a non-overseas trip year. Heather’s Alex was 10, and we felt he was old enough to go with us on an extended journey. We spent a week with Heather’s family who live at Bodega Bay, California, picked up Alex there, and flew to Fairbanks, our starting point. We included the usual stop in Denali and then took a train back to Anchorage. We opted to use the train from there to Seward where met our ship for the cruise down the coast, incorporating many side adventures.
Three weeks after our Alaska trip, we were off to Calgary to visit our son Greg and meet his new fiancée. We enjoyed the opportunity to explore Calgary and since Banff is only an hour drive away we had to spend a day there.

October took us to Charleston, South Carolina to visit friends. We visited the only tea plantation in North America, a dock where shrimp boats come in, a home and gardens from the hay day of plantation life, among other things.

I continue to work at Konza Prairie and have an active involvement with Friends of International Programs at KSU. Football is still an important part of our social lives, and we are pleased to have Coach Snyder back. How about the Cats basketball team?

Karen DeBres Cole: I married John Cole of Nottingham, England and decided to retire, having just been promoted to professor, and have moved permanently to the U.K. I hope that the department is doing well and I am enjoying my retirement. I’ve been busy here working on the house, planting spring bulbs and baking chocolate cakes. In the New Year I plan to be a volunteer hospital worker.

David Kromm: For more than six years Bobbie and I have sponsored a little girl, now aged ten, in Guatemala through the Christian Foundation for Children and Aging (CFCA). In February we flew to Guatemala where we stayed a week at the mission, which included an active day with Yenci Paola and her father and sister, and experienced the terrific work CFCA is doing in the Guatemalan Highlands. While there we decided to sponsor a second child, a Mayan girl. We then spent a week on our own exploring Guatemala City, Antigua, Flores, and the impressive Mayan ruins at Tikal.

Family history is my main hobby. When airfares dropped below $500 roundtrip Kansas City-Berlin, including all taxes and fees, Bobbie and I bought tickets to spend two weeks in Germany, where we traveled Mecklenburg, my maternal ancestral land, and visited Berlin. It was exciting walking the streets of my family villages, being in the churches where they were baptized and married over the generations, and driving through the countryside in which they lived and worked. I was inspired to finish a book on the family that I have been working on for several years. Five days in Berlin were downright fun. The museums are outstanding. In August Bobbie and I made a long toad trip in the Southeast. We first drove to Durham, where we stayed a week with our son, Chris and his family, and cheered the Bulls to a victory over Indianapolis. Next was Tallahassee, where we took part in a family wedding, and then New Orleans, where we visited several rebuilding projects. Most recently, we were in suburban Boston with our son, Randall, and his family. We heard our two oldest granddaughters sing in the Boston Children’s Chorus.

Huber Self: "K-State Geography Emeritus Professor Huber Self celebrated his 96th birthday on 24 January 2010.

Steve Stover: Greetings! Travel may be the sport of retired geographers; if so, I earned a letter in 2009. In January I joined my Oroville (CA) daughter and son-in-law for three weeks of summer in New Zealand. Later, came a visit to Seattle, two to Oroville, four to Wichita and one to Quinter (KS). Four members of my Kiwi family visited me here. So by the end of the year, “Home Sweet Home” sounded attractive.

Here in Manhattan I have had “a fully plate” with the Department’s birthday (my 90th) dinner and generous invitations to other special events. A fascinating project but a real time-taker has been to prepare a short paper on cultural aspects of natural disasters, especially floods. Slowly taking shape is my effort to record my memoirs, and for bedtime reading, top of the list is Richard Least Heat-Moon’s River-Horse a painless review of both the history and the geography of the U.S.
New K-State Geography Alumni Fund

In an exciting development, Dr. Kay Weller (M.A. Geography, 1990) and Ray McDonald (M.A. Geography, 1994), have established the "K-State Geography Alumni Fund" to support students in the Department of Geography. Specifically, the fund will be used for the purposes of covering travel expenses of students, both undergraduates and graduates, to meetings and professional development opportunities, as well as support undergraduate student scholarships. Contributions to the fund are accepted from alumni, family, faculty, students, and friends of K-State Geography. The fund is named to honor all alumni who we hope will support it.

Dr. Weller is currently a Professor of Geography at Northern Iowa University and Ray McDonald is Information Technology Coordinator for Buchanan County in Iowa. Both are avid fans of K-State athletics as well as supporters of K-State Geography. Kay is a member of the Geography Alumni Board.

Dr. Weller noted, “It is my hope that other K-State Geographers will contribute to this fund so that it reaches the endowment level of $25,000. If our Geography alumni would contribute a minimum of $100 each, we would reach the endowment level quickly and be able to begin expending funds. This will help to bridge the growing gap between what the State of Kansas provides and what students need.”

"Geography faculty and students from Kansas State University enjoy a reputation for participating in large numbers at regional and national meetings," said Richard Marston, university distinguished professor and head of the department. "This fund will go a long way to ensure that tradition continues and is enhanced. Participating in professional meetings and workshops is absolutely critical for geography students as they seek to develop skills communicating their research while also taking advantage of networking opportunities. Also, our undergraduate majors are experiencing a growing need for scholarship support.” Marston added that “100 percent of the Geography faculty donate to the K-State Foundation. This is remarkable and demonstrates the dedication that we all have to moving the department forward. Now we need the alumni to help.”

Will Breitkreutz (MA 2004), Chair of the K-State Geography Alumni Board, wants to join Kay Weller and Ray McDonald in encouraging alumni and friends of the department to donate to the new fund. “The K-State Geography Alumni Fund will meet one of the greatest needs of the department…as identified by the students themselves…the need for more financial support to help them attend geography meetings and professional development workshops. We appreciate Kay and Ray for stepping-up to get it started.”

Those wishing to contribute can do so in the form of an outright gift or pledge and need to make their contributions to the KSU Foundation with the K-State Geography Alumni Fund referenced in the memo line or along with their online gift. Those gifts can either be mailed to the KSU Foundation or to the Department of Geography. Alternatively, at the K-State Geography webpage (www.k-state.edu/geography/) a new link exists under Geography Alumni called “Giving to Geography.” Clicking on that link takes you to links for each of the Geography Funds to which one can donate.

KSU GEOGRAPHY ON FACEBOOK

Students, past and present, are also encouraged to visit the Facebook sites established by the Beta Psi Chapter of GTU (http://ksu.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2204848198) and GISSAL (http://ksu.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2204578931). GISSAL also has an active page on Facebook, the popular social networking site. This global site (http://ksu.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2204578931) is designed for GISSAL student staff, affiliated scientists, and alumni to keep abreast of current laboratory events, keep in touch with friends, and advertise employment opportunities. Please join our small, but growing, group of K-State GIScientists!
A K-State Geography Alumni Group has also been recently created. As the group page says, this is an informal facebook group, not sanctioned by KSU or any other entity, just an unofficial virtual gathering of those of us who either attended or graduated from geography at our alma mater, in support of each other and the department! You can access this page at [http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#!/group.php?gid=32339496987](http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#!/group.php?gid=32339496987).

There’s also a page for the St. George Geographical Society dedicated to the illustrious members of this exclusive group – which you can’t buy your way into… Find it at: [http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=10645500398](http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=10645500398)

**ALUMNI BUSINESS CARD DISPLAY PLANNED FOR SEATON HALL**

Help our students to learn the value of a geography degree by submitting a business card from your current organization. What better way to show what’s possible with geography! Please send your cards to: Shawn Hutchinson, Department of Geography, Kansas State University, 118 Seaton Hall, Manhattan, KS 66506.

**SY Seyler Undergraduate Certificate in GIScience**

The second Seyler Undergraduate GIScience Scholarship, first introduced during the GISSAL 15th Anniversary celebration in November 2005, was awarded in 2008 to geography major Nicole Wayant, and with no award in 2009. This 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.

Please contact Shawn Hutchinson (shutch@k-state.edu; 785-532-6727) from the Department of Geography or Sheila Walker from the KSU Foundation (sheilaw@found.ksu.edu; 785-532-7511) 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!

**K-STATE SENIOR FROM TOPEKA RECEIVES U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SCHOLARSHIP AND UNIVERSITY'S PRESIDENTIAL AWARD FOR UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH**

A Kansas State University senior has received a Science and Mathematics Research for Transformation scholarship through the U.S. Department of Defense for graduate studies in geography, and is the recipient of K-State's 2009 Presidential Award for Distinguished Undergraduate Student in Research for her work to predict disease outbreaks.

Nicole Wayant, senior in geography and mathematics, Topeka, received the Department of Defense scholarship, which includes payment of full tuition and employment placement through department. The scholarship recruits civilian scientists and engineers to work for the department and is for students that demonstrate potential for a successful career in research and development.

As the recipient of K-State's Presidential Award for Distinguished Undergraduate Student in Research, Wayant also receives $1,000 and a plaque. The award was established to recognize outstanding individual contributions to the creation of new knowledge at K-State.
Wayant is an undergraduate researcher in K-State's Remote Sensing Research Laboratory and has been working on a project with K-State's Douglas Goodin, professor of geography, and Diego Maldonado, assistant professor of mathematics. By linking vegetation with malaria, she is developing a method to help determine when and where malaria outbreaks might occur.

Wayant said malaria is most prevalent in tropical and sub-tropical world regions, which links malaria to precipitation; since precipitation is related to vegetation, the researchers assume malaria is related to vegetation. The researchers used a satellite-derived vegetation index and two data sets of malaria occurrence cases in two departments of Paraguay, Alto Parana and Canindeyu, from July 1981 to March 2003 and entered the information into MATLAB, which is computer software for computations and analysis.

Maldonado said Wayant designed and wrote original MATLAB functions to implement a correlation analysis algorithm for the data based on Fourier denoising. He said her analysis could have implications in the prediction of malaria breakouts and could provide insight on the evolution of malaria in South America, as the time series data used span more than 20 years.

"The techniques Nicole is developing will provide fundamental insights into the large-scale dynamics of arthropod vectored disease and will help control the spread of these diseases," Goodin said. "Nicole's contribution to the scientific analysis of this problem is not only beyond the capability of most undergraduate students, it rivals that of many established researchers in the field."

Wayant will present the research in May at the Kansas Section Mathematical Association of America. She previously presented the work in March at the National American Association of Geographers Meeting, and at the Regional American Association of Geographers Meeting in September 2008, where her paper received second place.

"Nicole goes far beyond just following instructions or taking indications," Maldonado said. "She brings her own ideas and suggestions to the research discussion. Her accomplishments have been recognized at the national, regional and campus level, and I am certain that this is just the beginning of her successful contributions to science and society."

Wayant is involved in another K-State research project with Max Lu, associate professor of geography at K-State. Using spatial statistics, she mapped where high and partially low rates of cancer deaths occur in the Midwest on a county level. The procedure was completed for three different time periods to see how cancer has progressed geographically, she said.

The NASA Kansas Space Grant Consortium funded the research on malaria and vegetation, and the Terry C. Johnson Center for Basic Cancer Research funded the cancer project. Wayant said she liked approaching the projects from a geographer's perspective.

"Instead of just answering questions with numbers, geography also tells us where these phenomena are happening," she said.

Wayant graduates from K-State in May and will serve a third consecutive summer internship with the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency. In the fall, she will pursue a master's in geography at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. In agreement with the Science and Mathematics Research for Transformation scholarship, Wayant then plans to work for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Topographic Engineering Center in Alexandria, Va.

She is a member of the Phi Kappa Phi honor society, is an undergraduate research assistant in K-State's Remote Sensing Research Laboratory and is presently an undergraduate scholar with K-State's Integrated Research
Center. She was the inaugural recipient of the Abraham Anson Memorial Scholarship from the American Society of Photogrammetric and Remote Sensing, and was named an Anderson Outstanding Senior in Academics by the K-State Alumni Association. She also has served as an intern with U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback of Kansas. A 2005 graduate of Topeka's Seaman High School, Wayant is the daughter of Bruce and Dawn Wayant.

**K-STATE DOCTORAL STUDENT WINS BEST STUDENT PAPER AWARD AT NATIONAL GEOGRAPHY CONFERENCE**

A paper by Ryan Bergstrom, a doctoral student in geography at Kansas State University, is the first-place winner in the student paper competition at the 32nd Applied Geography Conference, Oct. 28-31, in Baton Rouge, La.

Bergstrom, Bozeman, Mont., received the award for "Perceptions of Sustainable Community Development and Natural Resource Management: A Case Study of Two Montana Amenity Towns."

It is the second year in a row that Bergstrom has received a best paper award at a geography conference. He earned first place for top paper by a doctoral student at the 2008 meeting of the Great Plains-Rocky Mountain Division of the Association of American Geographers for "The Geographic and Economic Importance of Hunting in Southwestern Montana, USA."

Bergstrom has been researching his latest award-winning paper since spring 2009.

"This research came about after collaborating with my dissertation adviser Dr. Lisa Harrington, professor of geography at K-State, on some of her recent research and interests," Bergstrom said. "Dr. Harrington studies sustainability in rural communities, and as I wanted to study mountain environments in the American West, we thought this was a perfect fit."

Bergstrom said the mountains and valleys surrounding Yellowstone National Park, often referred to as the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, have been known to researchers as an ideal location to study the interactions and interdependencies of economic growth and environmental protection due to the region's complex mosaic of private and public lands, competing natural resource uses, and rapid population growth. Bergstrom's research involved the Montana communities of West Yellowstone and Big Sky.

"The area's abundant public lands were at one time seen as 'storehouses' of natural resources available for exploitation, but today are used to a large extent for multiple recreational activities and second or amenity-based homes," he said. "The shift from reliance on exploitive consumption to recreational use is significant because the loss of local economic inputs from extractive industries has been replaced with activities which place new, and oftentimes more complex, pressures on the environment and decision makers."

It has been suggested that the region's natural amenities have been the catalyst for its growing population and economy, and that the challenge for decision makers is the sustainability of these amenities, Bergstrom said.

"To facilitate decision-maker objectives toward sustaining the natural environment, it is imperative to have a clear understanding of the perceptions, priorities and experiences of local communities," he said. "Thus, the objective of this study was to determine how residents of two communities within the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem perceive, prioritize and act upon issues of sustainability as well as which factors contribute to those perceptions. A mixed-methods approach, combining archival research and newspaper content analysis, was implemented to meet these objectives." Bergstrom is the son of Dennis and Jennifer Bergstrom, Dellwood, Minn. He plans to complete his doctorate in spring 2011 and would like to work in academia, specifically at the university level. He also has earned a bachelor's in geography and a master's in earth sciences, both from Montana State University.
**Melissa Belz:** Hello alumni. This is my first year in the doctoral program and I am really enjoying being back in the world of academia. I received my bachelor’s degree in environmental design in 1995 from UMass Amherst and my master’s degree in vernacular architecture in 2000 from Oxford Brookes University in England. I have taken quite a break, but think the wheels are smoothly in motion once again. After receiving my master’s degree I worked in the field of sustainable development with American non-profits and international NGO’s, training builders in Mexico’s borderland, Jamaica and throughout Mongolia. Eventually, trying to stay put in beautiful Colorado I turned to work in my other love, historic preservation. Now, I hope to use my interest in vernacular architecture and international development to study changes to traditional dwellings and analyze how people continue to convey meaning in a changing landscape. My first semester at K-State was very busy and I expect the same for the spring. I will continue to instruct EG1 labs and look forward to classes and research as well as getting to know my fellow classmates better in our “free time”.

**Ryan D. Bergstrom:**
Greetings – this is now my second year as a doctoral student in the Department of Geography. Over the past year I have transitioned from teaching Environmental Geography labs to teachings full lecture courses including Geography of Tourism and World Regional Geography (my first 300 student class!). This semester has brought with it another exciting opportunity for me, that of teaching Fundamentals of Climatology, a task with which I am greatly honored to have been given. This past fall I completed both my preliminary exams and dissertation proposal, and am now gearing up for field work in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem this summer. I will be conducting key informant interviews, focusing on perceptions of sustainable community development and natural resource management. This will be followed by mailed-surveys this Fall, as well as a content analysis of local newspapers within the region. This research will continue to allow me to maintain my close connections with the Mountainous West that were established through my B.S. and M.S. at Montana State University. It will also provide me with the opportunity to selfishly pursue the other passion of my life outside geography, fly-fishing and hiking! Academic highlights this year include the completion of my preliminary exams and course-work here at K-State, as well as attending several conferences throughout the country including an extremely adventurous road trip to Las Vegas with departmental colleagues, and the Applied Geography Conference in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where I was honored to receive the Best Paper Presentation Award. I continue to be grateful for the opportunities our department has provided me thus far, and look forward with anticipation to the coming years as a student in the Department of Geography at Kansas State University. Go Cats!

**Matt Cartlidge:** Life happens when time passes you by. It’s remarkable one year ago I was writing my first newsletter entry and telling about all the new experiences of graduate school. Now I find myself married, an experienced lab T.A., past presenter at a national geography conference, and on my way to the last semester of my Masters degree. Now the plan is to enjoy Christmas and New Years with family and finish writing my thesis in the Spring. That is all for now and I hope this newsletter finds you in a place of good health, close friends, and Wildcat victories. Take care and God Bless.

**Julie Commerford:** Hello! I am in my 4th semester as a master’s student here at K-State. In early March, I traveled to Lund, Sweden to attend a week-long workshop on modeling terrestrial vegetation and pollen assemblages. After I returned from Sweden, I was off to Las Vegas for the 2009 Annual Meeting of the AAG. I spent my summer doing my fieldwork for my thesis, which involved floating around on cattle ponds, and running around on prairies in the Flint Hills of Kansas. I taught three lab sections of GIS 1 in Spring 2009, and
three lab sections of Environmental Geography 2 in Fall 2009. This semester I am writing my thesis, and planning to finish in May.

Sohini Dutt: Namaste to all of you! I am a graduate student who has come all the way from India and am pursuing a PhD degree. I have been here for three years now and it has been a great. I have been a GTA and last semester I taught World Regional Geography. It has been a good learning experience. 2009 was very eventful for me as I took my preliminary examinations and have attained the status of a doctoral candidate. I have also defended my proposal. I have worked with Dr. Bimal K. Paul in some of his research on Floods in Bangladesh which is awaiting publication. I attended the National AAG Conference in Vegas and presented a paper on “Perceptions of HIV Risk and Preventive Measures among Female Students in Kolkata, India”. I am currently working on my dissertation research which is on AIDS risk perception among college going female students in Kolkata, India.

Zachery Eddy: I’m currently working with Charles Lee (K-State Research and Extension Wildlife Specialist) and Dr. Shawn Hutchinson on a 2-year project funded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). We are collecting data to help quantify and describe black-tailed prairie dog (Cynomys ludovicianus) dispersal and population dynamics in the shortgrass prairie of northwest Kansas. This project was funded, because prairie dogs are the main prey choice of black-footed ferrets (Mustela nigripes)—one of North America’s most endangered species. Our work is conducted around 2 experimental ferret reintroduction sites in Logan County, Kansas. These sites contain 2 of the largest prairie dog colony complexes in the state (over 10,000 acres total) and are also privately owned—making them the first privately held black-footed ferret reintroduction sites in the United States. Our work focuses on controlling prairie dog dispersal away from reintroduction sites as well as investigating the correlation between environmental variables (dominant grass type, soil type, slope, etc.) and local prairie dog densities. We expect our findings to be used by the USFWS and other conservation organizations to shape future prairie dog conservation plans at our study sites as well as others within the shortgrass prairie ecosystem.

David Koch: Hi all, I hope everyone is well. Everything is continuing to move along for me. My work in Paraguay continued this year with the final field season for my NSF-DDRI money. Now I am working on writing up results and putting it all together into a thesis. The thesis should be finished this Spring, when I can move on and become an alum, too. This work has been very rewarding and it has been good for me to get back to Paraguay on a regular basis. For those of you who don't know, the research I am working on for my thesis looks as some of the relationships between hantavirus and land cover in Paraguay. I lived in Paraguay for a few years in the early 1990's, it has been very good to be able to get back there and also to have a research project in a place I know well. I am also in the process of teaching my third semester of World Regional Geography. I appreciate having the mix of conference presentation, teaching, and research opportunities that the Department of Geography has presented to me.

Rhett Mohler: I am currently in my fourth year of the Ph. D. program, and hopefully will be done in the fall of 2010. I recently completed both my comprehensive exams and dissertation proposal, and am now forcing myself to start writing the dissertation. The last year has flown by, but has been a lot of fun. In spring, I camped for a week on the way out to the AAG meeting in Las Vegas, visiting Arches National Park, Natural Bridges National Monument, and the Grand Canyon. However, the most thrilling part of the trip was descending the Moki Dugway for the first time. Well, I better get back to writing or else I’ll never graduate. Take care.

Tyra Olstad: Hello again! Although I wrote of "settling in" in at K-State a year ago, I've just continued to wander since then -- to the Colorado Plateau over spring break to raft / hike / present a paper on "Cultivating a Great Plains Aesthetic" at AAG in Las Vegas, then up to Rapid City in May to give a presentation on "Connecting Arts to Natural Resources" at a meeting for managers of the National Grasslands, and then way on up to Alaska, where I spent the summer working for the Forest Service in a cave (El
Capitan) on an island (Prince of Wales) in the world's largest temperate rainforest (Tongass) before coming back to Manhattan for another year of classes / teaching. I'm enjoying using photos of deserts / grasslands / forests / oceans / cities / speleothems to illustrate concepts in lectures for Human Geography, but I'm still trying to figure out how best to weave all of my experiences into a cohesive dissertation (Alaska's a bit of an outlier -- it's full of countless wonders -- caves! karst! loons and bears and bog orchids! -- that inspired a presentation on "Terra Incognita" for the regional AAG meeting in Logan in September, but doesn't quite seem to relate to the aesthetic of grasslands...); I would say that I intend to just circle the trails at Konza for a little while and let ideas fall into place (quite literally), but I'm getting ready to head to the Ozarks then Death Valley then Washington DC...

Jedidiah Riley: I started the Graduate program in the Fall of 2009 after graduating from Northwest Missouri State University the previous spring. It was sure nice to return to my home state after what felt like a lifetime in Missouri! My main area of study right now is geopolitics and looking into international relations as they pertain to globalization. Starting in January I also will be a teaching assistant for the Environmental Geography I Labs.

Linnea Sando: Hello! I am currently enrolled in my last semester here, which is hard to believe; the time has gone by quickly! Teaching cartography labs, taking classes, working on my thesis, and traveling kept me busy in 2009. My thesis research took me to western Montana and Idaho this past summer. I spent the days studying haying landscapes, and through the process I met a lot of great people and explored in depth one of my favorite parts of the country. I will be attending the AAG Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. in April to present my thesis research. This summer I look forward to returning to Montana for a bit to do some more exploring.

Roy Sando: I traveled to rural SE Nigeria with my wife, Linnea Sando, at the end of May, 2009, to conduct some field research for my thesis concerning deforestation and malaria transmission. We had planned on spending close to a month there; however, the mosquitoes had different plans. I contracted Dengue fever, a.k.a. "Break-bone fever," in the first week and we were forced to cut our travel time in half. Despite this adventure, we plan to return to Nigeria in August, 2010.

I worked with Doug Goodin and John Harrington to analyze the effects of weather patterns on air pollution caused by rangeland burning in the Flint Hills (manuscript in progress). I have starting to piece together some elements of my thesis. My thesis will investigate the effects of various land use changes in rural Nigeria, and how these changes impact local malaria transmission over a short period of time.

Travis Smith: In 2009 I officially switched from a Masters degree to working on a PhD. Kevin Blake is my major advisor and quite simply, I would not be where I am today without his foresight, guidance and encouragement. Due to scheduling conflicts I only enrolled in one class this year, but it was an excellent one: History of the American West in Film and Literature, where we discussed (among many things) the influence writers (like Cooper, Wister & McMurtry) and actors (like Hart, the Duke & Eastwood) had on Western myths. I continue to teach full time at KSU in the Communication Studies, Theatre & Dance department. I successfully (and surprisingly) completed BAK 2009, but by far the best part of 2009 was the birth of my first child, Gillian, back in February.

Lisa K. Tabor: I started my graduate school adventures at KSU last summer and have enjoyed every minute of it. I come from a background in education and the transition from being the teacher to being the student has proved to be both challenging and exhilarating. As of December 2009, I wrapped up my last semester with the local school district and started working as a research assistant for Dr. John Harrington and the Kansas Geographic Alliance dual-encoding history lesson plans for grades K-12 with the good stuff - more geography! My research interests lie predominantly in geographic education, while emphasizing the importance of water resources and global environmental change. Cheers to a great year!

Tom Vought: 2009 was, if nothing else, a rather eventful year. Having traded in my unofficial title
as GISSAL’s Graduate Student Lab Manager in 2008 for a stack of K-State business cards naming me as the lab’s Assistant Director of Research, my promotion reached its final stage in early 2009 when Dr. Shawn Hutchinson hired me as a full-time Research Assistant assigned to ongoing work with the Fort Riley RTLA office. Since then, I have been busy conducting environmental surveys at nearby Fort Riley and downloading just about every satellite image that has ever been taken of the Fort Riley/Manhattan/Konza Prairie area.

Despite changing my focus a number of times, I continue to work towards completing a dissertation. In late August, I proposed my official dissertation topic – defining and monitoring sustainability for military training lands. I hope to be finished sometime near the end of the 2010 calendar year.

In December, I found out that one of the posters that I sent to ESRI’s International User’s Conference was selected to appear in the 2010 ESRI Map Book. The poster was based on research that Dr. Hutchinson and I did in 2008 with Dr Leland McKinney. It focused on using a Web-based GIS to display the quality of wheat harvest across the Great Plains.

Lastly, thanks to a project that Ryan Bergstrom, Mike Dulin, Mitch Stimers, and I worked on for the 2009 AAG meeting in Las Vegas, NV, I have had the strange honor of earning a bit more attention than I am used to. The project in question, titled “The Spatial Distribution of the Seven Deadly Sins”, has since been the subject of articles and interviews from a number of newspapers, blogs, radio shows, and even the K-State Arts & Sciences alumni newsletter.

**Brandon Weihs:** This year has been a great one! I was admitted to the Geography department PhD program, and worked as a GTA this fall teaching a couple Environmental Geography laboratories as well as aided Dr. Bimal Paul with his Human Geography course. I’m particularly proud of this years accomplishments, such as graduating from the University of Nebraska at Omaha with a Master’s degree in Geography, being accepted into Kansas State University Geography (a great department), winning the AAG Mel Marcus Award in Physical Geography, attending and presenting at several professional meetings (AAG in Las Vegas, NV, BGS in Blacksburg, VA, and AGU in San Francisco, CA), and finally having two potential publications in the works (one accepted in Zeitschrift für Geomorphologie, and one still under review in Geografiska Annaler). I am still working out the kinks of my dissertation topic, but in general, I will be investigating glacial erosion surfaces in the Himalaya and their polygenetic morphologies, under the advisement of Dr. Marston. This spring I will be lecturing Cartography and Thematic Mapping for the first time, a topic that I am very happy to be working on! I am really glad to be in the Kansas State Geography department, and I look forward to the next few years based on this first, fantastic semester!

**James Wells:** 2009 (and the first two weeks of 2010) was a busy year for me. At the AAG conference in Las Vegas, I presented an auto tour I created for the greater Manhattan area, relating to themes of the newly established Freedom’s Frontier National Heritage Area. After that, I spent most of the rest of the year focusing on my dissertation fieldwork. I am in the process of re-photographing all 53 images contained within Thomas and Geraldine Vales’ *Western Images, Western Landscapes: Travels Along U.S. 89* in order to depict landscape change throughout the American West over the past 25 years. All except two photographs in the Tucson area are now completed. By the end of this spring, I hope to have all fieldwork and follow-up research completed, in line for a degree completion date of May 2011.

I have included one of my photo sets: a particularly interesting scene from Nogales, Arizona that reveals both tightened border security and the new dominance of the Spanish language on the local landscape (in the original (B&W) photograph, the McDonalds sign reads “Welcome.”
Melissa Wilson: Hello! I am in my first year of the Masters program. I completed a B.A. in Psychology and a B.A. in Social and Behavioral Science from Arizona State University last May. This is my first time living outside of Arizona and adjusting to the cold temperatures and snow here has been quite an experience. My research interests are mainly in population geography and I look forward to learning more about the field. I have really enjoyed my time in the department and it’s great to be part of such an awesome group of people!

Geography Colloquia for 2009
Department of Geography and Gamma Theta Upsilon

Friday, 23 January, 3:30pm, 132 Seaton Hall: Tom Baerwald (NSF Geography & Spatial Sciences)
“Geography and Interdisciplinarity”

Friday, 20 February, 3:30pm, 132 Seaton Hall: Dr. Subash Das (Dept. of geography and Environment, Jahangirnagar University, Bangladesh)
“Climate Change Vulnerability and Adaptation in Bangladesh”

Friday, 27 February, 3:30pm, UN Big 12 Room: Dr. Jeffrey Smith (K-State Geography)
“Three men, One Road Our of Zacatecas”

Friday, 6 March, 3:30pm, 101 Bluemont Hall: Dr. Don Mitchell (Syracuse Geography)
“Labor's Geography: Capital, Violence, Guest Workers, and the Post-World War II Landscape in California"

Friday, 17 April, 3:30pm, 132 Seaton Hall: Dr. Shawn Hutchinson (K-State Geography)
“Certifying Rapid Soil Erosion Assessment Methods and Tools for Military Training Lands in Kansas and Hawaii”

Friday, 1 May, 3:30pm, 132 Seaton Hall: Dr. Kendra McLauchlan & Julie Commerford (K-State Geography)
“An Introduction to the Flint Hills Grassland Pollen Project”

Friday, 21 August, 3:00pm, UN Big 12 Room: Dr. John A. Harrington, Jr. (K-State Geography)
“The Climate of the Central North American Grassland: What We've Learned and Research Questions for the 21st Century

Friday, 11 September, 3:30pm, 132 Seaton Hall: Dr. Dan Hirmas (KU Geography)
“Soil Geomorphology of an Arid Mountain Bolson, Mojave Desert, USA

Friday, 18 September, 3:30pm, UN Little Theatre: Dr. Sarah Bednarz (Texas A&M Geography)
“Spatial Thinking: Progress In and For Geography”

Friday, 9 October, 3:30pm, 132 Seaton Hall: Dr. Milan Shrestha (Arizona State University, Global Institute of Sustainability)
“A Comparative Analysis of Land Fragmentation and Socioecological Gradients"

Friday, 23 October, 3:30pm, 132 Seaton Hall, Dr. Steven Kale (SR Kale Consulting)
“Renewable Energy Development and Energy Sustainability in the Pacific Northwest”

Friday, 6 November, 3:30pm, 132 Seaton Hall: Dr. Chuck Martin (K-State Geography)
“Heavy Metal Storage in the Lahn River Basin, Central Germany: 15 Years and Counting”
Huber Self Geography Scholarship: Aleks Spangler
The Self Scholarship was established in 1981 and honors Dr. Huber Self who retired in 1980 after devoting more than 33 years of his professional life to the advancement of geography at Kansas State University. The scholarship is supported by Dr. Self, alumni, and friends of the Department of Geography. It is presented to an outstanding undergraduate geography major.

H.L. "Sy" Seyler Undergraduate GIScience Scholarship: No Award Given in 2009
The Seyler Scholarship was established in 2006 and honors Dr. H.L. "Sy" Seyler who retired in 2000 after devoting nearly three decades of professional service to the advancement of both geography and geographic information science at Kansas State University. The scholarship is supported by alumni and friends of the Department of Geography.

William D. Grimm Memorial Scholarship: Terry O'Connor
The Grimm Scholarship was established in 1992 and honors William, a 1986 K-State Geography graduate who was killed in the Persian Gulf War on 31 January 1991. The scholarship is supported by the Grimm family, alumni, and friends of the Department of Geography. It is presented to an outstanding undergraduate geography major.

LeBlanc Outstanding Undergraduate Major Award: Courtney Estes
The LeBlanc Award was established in 1977 and is made possible through the generosity of Leonard LeBlanc III, who earned a B.S. in Geography in 1973. It is presented to an outstanding undergraduate geography student.

National Council for Geographic Education (NCGE)/Association of American Geographers Award for Excellence of Scholarship: Nicole Wayant
The NCGE/AAG Award was established in 1979 is presented to the graduating senior in K-State Geography with the highest grade point average. The cash award is supported by the Department of Geography.

White Geography Graduate Teaching Assistant Excellence Award: Tom Vought
The White Award was established in 1989 and is presented to the K-State Geography graduate student selected for outstanding performance as a teaching assistant. The White Award is made possible through the generosity of Steve and Sue White.

Rumsey B. Marston Scholarship: No Award Given in 2009
The R.B. Marston Scholarship was established in 1986 and honors the memory of Rumsey Bissell Marston, and is supported by the Marston family, alumni, and friends of the Department of Geography. The scholarship is presented to a graduate student who writes a thesis or dissertation proposal in physical geography that involves a significant level of well-conceived fieldwork.

Graduate Student Leadership Award: Mike Dulin & Sumanth Reddy
The Leadership Award was established in 2002 to recognize K-State Geography graduate students for their professionalism, dedication, and leadership. The Leadership Award is supported by alumni and friends of the Department of Geography.

Mary Dobbs Outstanding Citizenship Award: Ryan Bergstrom
The Mary Dobbs Award was established in 2006 to honor the memory of Mary, a K-State Geography doctoral student who passed away in Fall 2006 and was awarded the Ph.D. posthumously. The Dobbs Award is presented to geography students who best exemplify the spirit of the department and a willingness to give "110 percent." The Dobbs Award is supported by alumni and friends of the Department of Geography. K-State students have now earned 20 Udall scholarships. K-State is third among state universities in Udall scholarship competition. Only the University of Montana with 31 and Arizona State University with 21 have had more Udall winners since the competition began in 1996.
Department Graduates:

Congratulations and best wishes!

Spring 2009

Master of Arts
Jacob George
Benjamin Meade
Felicia Wilcox

Bachelor of Arts
Hannah Esther Wilcox

Bachelor of Science
Matthew Louis Ferrara
Jake L. Galyon
Lisa Renae Hook
Brett Olen Landoll
Spencer Wayne Parsons
Peter Julius Senior
Michelle Sidorfsky
Kerry Ann Stevens
Bryan J. Unruh
Steven K. Walterscheid
Christopher M. Ward
Nicole Marie Wayant
Iris Elaine Wilson
Maxwell Dennis Wright

Fall 2009

Doctor of Philosophy
Ramatoulaye, Ndiaye

Master of Arts
Patrick Abbott
Mike Dulin (Su09)
Felicia Wilcox

Bachelor of Science
Ben Jacob Burkland
Jeremy Joseph Glotzbach (Su09)
Thomas Andrew Ostmeyer
Jorge Antonio Vargas
Sean Holland Wilde
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 (July 1, 2007-June 30, 2009)

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Alumni News

John Cyr: (MA, 1981) has been with the North Central Regional Planning Commission in Beloit, Kansas for the past 30 years, serving as Executive Director for 23 of those years. In 2008 John elected to step back from that role and to begin partial retirement, which he defines as a simple state of mind in that he remains with the NCRPC on contract as director of special projects. John is also active in the developing Kansas Association of Regional Development Organizations and currently serves as its Executive Director.

Steve Kale (BA Geography, 1970; BS Business Administration, 1970) is principal of SR Kale Consulting LLC, Salem, Oregon, where he specializes in freight, intermodal, and socioeconomic planning, research, and analysis. He has lived in Oregon for 27 years, after moving there from Lincoln, Nebraska, where he received a Masters and PhD in geography and worked for the Nebraska Department of Economic Development for seven years. In 2004, he retired from the State of Oregon after having worked for Oregon State University and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) for more than 20 years. His work at ODOT included writing Freight Moves the Oregon Economy, Oregon's first statewide freight study. More recently, he has been involved with writing a guidebook on engaging the private sector in freight transportation planning, as well as assisting in the preparation of the Oregon Freight Plan. He is the author or co-author of several recent articles on freight planning in the Transportation Research Record, and in January 2010 was co-author of a presentation made at the annual meeting of the Transportation Research Board. He is a member of the K-State Geography Alumni Board, and in October 2009, made a presentation on "Renewable Energy Development and Energy Sustainability in the Pacific Northwest" in conjunction with the Alumni Board's annual meeting. Prior to his presentation, he was named the department's 2009 Geography Distinguished Alum.

Chris Laingen: Alumni 2009, Greetings from Eastern Illinois University! Shortly after defending my dissertation last spring I was offered a tenure-track job at EIU in the Department of Geology & Geography, so in August, my wife and I packed up a U-Haul and moved from Columbus, OH to Charleston, IL. Things couldn’t have worked out any better. Not only did I get a job at EIU, but my wife did as well as an athletic trainer working with the women’s volleyball and basketball teams. My main teaching duties include Biogeography, Natural Resource Conservation, and Agricultural Geography. The past year has been full of excitement: defending my dissertation, getting a job, moving to Illinois, running my first half marathon, attending my first college world series in Omaha, my wife seeing the Black Hills of South Dakota (Mt. Rushmore and the Badlands) for the first time in her life, and while we were there, we climbed to the top of Harney Peak, the highest point east of the Rocky Mountains.

Badlands National Park, South Dakota, July 2009

My research interests continue to focus on Midwest land use change. I have a manuscript in the works that deals with some of my dissertation findings (pheasant hunting in South Dakota) and I’ve also begun looking at the expansion of the Corn Belt into North Dakota and its overall changes since the 1950s.

Life is good in Charleston. We purchased and remodeled a house that we are now living in, our jobs are great, and our dog, Duke, finally has backyard that he can run around in all day long.

Ben Meade: Hello, and greetings fellow K-State Geography Alumni! I hope this newsletter finds you all doing well, wherever your life and pursuits are leading you. After graduating with my Master's this past spring, I accepted a position as a geologist with an environmental consulting company called Environmental Resources Management (ERM) and am working out of their downtown Boston, MA
office. The position entails a lot of tasks, both in the field and in the office. Currently, much of what I am doing involves working to understand groundwater supply, movement, and quality for ERM's clients. The position is going well so far, and it is great to be living and working in New England, where I am originally from. When not working, I can usually be found outside exploring the woods, mountains, and waterways of the Northeast, with the overarching goal to be outside as much as possible! I also have some plans in the works for some travel in the coming year, with some time planned for the Rockies and possibly the Pacific Northwest. For a Geographer/Geologist, it wouldn't be a good year without seeing some new places!!!! Well wishes for 2010, and I look forward to hearing from other Geography alums as the year goes on.

Regards, - Ben

John R. Roberts: (BS ’73, MA ’74) Serves as the CEO and Executive Director of the Natomas Conservancy based in Sacramento, CA. At the Conservancy, John administers and manages a 501(c)(3) charitable foundation with approximately $60 million in assets, and implements an extensive habitat conservation plan for city, county, state and federal governments and industrial park land owners. The organization operates in the 54,000-acre Natomas Basin in Northern California. John designs, builds and manages nature preserves, including wetlands and marsh, and oversees farming operations that include rice production and livestock grazing.

In addition to the Conservancy, John serves on the Board of Directors of SureWest Communications, Inc., based in Roseville, CA and with operations in the Kansas City area. At SureWest, John chairs the Board’s Compensation Committee, and also serves on its audit committee. SureWest Communications has been headquartered in Northern California for more than 90 years, and offers bundled residential and commercial services that include IP-based digital and high-definition television, high-speed Internet, Voice over IP, and local and long distance (NSF-OISE); Enhancing US Scientific Leadership and Geographic Research: International Collaboration in the Middle East, including travel funds to support scholars’ participation in the International Geographical Union (funded by NSF-telephone. The company was the nation's first to launch HDTV over an IP network and also delivers the fastest symmetrical Internet speeds in the nation at up to 50 Mbps on its fiber-to-the-home network.

John formerly was the CEO of the Sacramento Metro Chamber of Commerce, and prior to that, was CEO of the Sacramento Area Commerce and Trade Organization, the region's six-county economic development organization.

He regularly returns to Manhattan for visits with his family, and loves to stroll the Geography Department portions of Seaton Hall. He fondly remembers his time at KSU Geography, recalling what was learned from the "S Professors" (Seyler, Siddall, Self, Stover, Stacey), from whom he took most of his coursework.

Conservancy web site: www.natomasbasin.org
LinkedIn: http://www.linkedin.com/in/johnrroberts

Dr. Patricia Solís: (BA, BS, MA in Geography @ KSU 1996) continues in her seventh year at the Association of American Geographers as Director of Outreach and Strategic Initiatives where she designs and implements special projects to promote studies, education, and public understanding of geography. She coordinates efforts to strengthen and develop programs that build upon various strategic initiatives of the AAG as well as core activities, including AAG grants and awards, enhancing diversity within the discipline, various careers projects, and improving graduate education, Annual Meeting activities, committees, specialty and affinity groups, developing regions, liaison with external organizations such as the United Nations, and others.

She is currently Principal Investigator (PI) on a number of major funded projects, including the Geographic Technologies for Biodiversity in Africa Initiative, engaging student-mentor teams from 12 countries with US student exchanges (with MyCOE, SERVIR, RCMRD, funded by NASA and NSF-GSS); Departments and Underrepresented Students ALIGNED: Addressing Locally-tailored Information Infrastructure & Geoscience Needs for Enhancing Diversity, combining a spatial information system and an online clearinghouse of
materials for helping departments to increase the participation of members of underrepresented groups in geography/geosciences in the US (funded by NSF-OEDG); Institute for Integration of Research on Climate Change and Hazards in the Americas for fifty participants from the Americas to study at a two-week long symposium/workshop in Panama City (with OAS, USGS, NCA, UTP, UNEP-LAC; funded by NSF-PASI). She also continues to serve as Senior Personnel on the AAG’s EDGE Project, Phase 2, to study how geography graduate programs prepare students for careers in business, government, and non-profit organizations (funded by NSF-REESE).

In addition, she is adjunct faculty in the Department of Geography at The George Washington University and has recently been named as the U.S. National Section Geography Commission Representative of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History of the Organization of American States.

Jason T. Sweet: My wife, Nicole, and three daughters (Cami 6, Libby 2, and Louisa 8 months) are living in Peculiar, MO just outside Kansas City. Since July I've been working as the Sr GIS Analyst for Greenhorne & O'mara. Our office is serving as the Regional Support Center for FEMA Region 7's RiskMAP program.

David Wall: B.S. 1976 currently Professor of Geography St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, Minnesota (just east of Lake Wobegon and in fact in the summer I regularly ride my bike on the Lake Wobegon trail). I’m in my third year as Department chair of a terrific department (11 years at SCSU) . I have great colleagues to work with and interesting programs to coordinate. We offer 3 separate majors, Geography, Travel and Tourism, and Land Surveying, as well as a separate minor in GIS. The Land Surveying major is in many regards the most unique as it is the only Land Surveying major housed in a Department of Geography (most are associated with engineering departments such as civil engineering). The Land Surveying program is housed in Geography because of the number of GIS courses those students take. Thank, David

In The News

K-STATE SCIENTISTS STUDY HOW THE CONNECTIVITY OF THE U.S. AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPE INFLUENCES THE RISKS OF CROP PESTS, DISEASE; FINDINGS COULD INFORM SUBSIDY POLICIES

MANHATTAN -- Agriculture in the United States is critical to global food security, but new pests and diseases threaten production. Ten such pests are estimated to enter the country every year, and the federal government spends more than $1 billion annually on research, emergency response and education related to crop pests.

That's why Kansas State University scientists have used an analysis of connectivity to evaluate the vulnerability of U.S. agriculture to the spread of pests and diseases in four major crops: maize, soybean, wheat and cotton. Their work was published in the February issue of the journal BioScience and is available at: http://www.aibs.org/bioscience-press-releases/resources/Margosian_0902.pdf

The K-State team included: Margaret Margosian, U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Science Fellow in the department of geography; Karen Garrett, associate professor of plant pathology; Shawn Hutchinson, associate professor of geography; and Kimberly With, associate professor of biology.

The analysis of connectivity was based on county-level information about acreage of each of the four crops. The researchers used a network connecting counties to model the potential spread of pests and diseases.
Spread was modeled as more likely in areas with abundant acreage of the particular crop. Species of pests and pathogens differ in their ability to spread where the crop species they use is rare, so a range of requirements for crop availability was included in the analysis.

This type of analysis can be used to reveal areas likely to be strongly linked for pest or pathogen movement. For example, linkages are strong for soybean and maize acreage in the central United States because a pest or pathogen introduced to one area could spread relatively easily to other areas. Major U.S. wheat and cotton regions are less connected at the national scale but may be strongly connected locally.

According to the researchers, evaluation of these patterns can inform debate about U.S. policies that provide subsidies for a small number of agricultural species. Connectivity at a national scale and at smaller scales also can be useful in decision-making for management of invasive pathogens and pests. Where cropping areas are less connected, programs for pest or pathogen eradication are more likely to be successful.

The project was supported by the U. S. Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, the National Science Foundation, the Kansas Agricultural Experiment Station and K-State.

More information on the researchers and their labs is available at: http://www.k-state.edu/pdecology/ http://www.k-state.edu/geography/research/gissal.html http://www.k-state.edu/withlab/index.html

ONE NATION, SEVEN SINS
Geographers measure propensity for evil in states, counties
Kansas State University's Department of Geography

The question of evil and where it lurks has been largely ignored by the scientific community, which is why a recently released study titled “The Spatial Distribution of the Seven Deadly Sins Within Nevada” is groundbreaking: Never before has a state’s fall from grace been so precisely graphed and plotted.

Geographers from Kansas State University have used certain statistical measurements to quantify Nevada’s sins and come up with a county-by-county map purporting to show various degrees of lust, gluttony, greed, sloth, wrath, envy and pride in the Silver State. By culling statistics from nationwide databanks of things like sexually transmitted disease infection rates (lust) or killings per capita (wrath), the researchers came up with a sin index. This is a precision party trick — rigorous mapping of ridiculous data.

Their findings were presented Tuesday at the Association of American Geographers’ annual meeting at the Riviera, where Kansas State geography research associate Thomas Vought fielded questions while standing next to a poster of his research. Seven maps of Nevada, in seven different colors, for seven different sins.

The darker a county, the more evil it is.

Greed was calculated by comparing average incomes with the total number of inhabitants living beneath the poverty line. On this map, done in yellow, Clark County is bile (see map on Page 2).

Envy was calculated using the total number of thefts — robbery, burglary, larceny and stolen cars. Rendered in green, of course, Clark County is emerald.

Wrath was calculated by comparing the total number of violent crimes — murder, assault and rape — reported to the FBI per capita. Vought and his colleagues used the color red to illustrate wrath, so Clark County looks like a fresh welt. Washoe is slightly statistically duller. Everywhere else is a friendly pork pink.
Lust was calculated by compiling the number of sexually transmitted diseases — HIV, AIDS, syphilis, chlamydia and gonorrhea — reported per capita. Here again, Clark and Washoe counties are worst. Carson City County is a close third.

Gluttony was calculated by counting the number of fast food restaurants per capita, and this is one category where Clark County is bested. First in deep fry goes to Carson City.

Sloth was calculated by comparing expenditures on arts, entertainment and recreation with the rate of employment. Here again Clark County is beat, scoring only average on the scale of sloth.

And pride, lastly, is most important. The root of all sins, in this study, is the aggregate of all data. Vought and his Kansas colleagues combined all data from the six other sins and averaged it into an overview of all evil. So pride, mapped in purple, shows the states two darkest bruises: counties Clark and Carson City.

Yet, in the grand scheme of things, maybe we’re not that bad. While Vought and his colleagues spent four weeks on the detailed Nevada study, they also ran the numbers on some 3,000 counties across the country, a nationwide survey of sin.

Turns out Nevada is unremarkable when compared with other states. Sure, we have a little discoloration around Washoe and Clark counties when it comes to wrath, and Southern Nevada as a whole stands out in the nationwide map of greed, but other than that, we’re almost colorless, boring even, when compared with Texas, which ranked high for gluttony, or wrath, which was concentrated in Florida and surrounding states.

Moreover, the Kansas geographers also compared the level of sin in 10 top casino markets, and while the Las Vegas Strip ranked first for greed, it could muster no better than third place for pride, the aggregate of all sins. It was the southern gambling cities — Lula, Miss.; Biloxi, Miss.; and Shreveport, La., that came out on top of the bottom. Why, exactly, remains to be seen. The Kansas geographers started this project, it seems pretty clear, for the erudite amusement; something to stand out at a 6,000-person convention consumed with the world’s heavy questions. But if Tuesday’s convention crowd was evidence, the sin study was interesting to other scholars as well. So Vought and colleagues plan to continue their national study of evil.

“It’s too much fun,” Vought said, smiling in a way that suggested, if not pride, then a good deal of pleasure.

K-STATE’S PRESIDENTIAL AWARD RECOGNIZES CHUCK MARTIN FOR EXCELLENCE IN ADVISING

MANHATTAN -- Kansas State University faculty member Chuck Martin, received the 2009 Presidential Award for his compassion, dedication and creativity as an advisor of undergraduate students.

The Presidential Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Advising is going to Charles Martin, associate professor of geography, and William Meredith, director of the School of Family Studies and Human Services, will receive the Presidential Award for Outstanding Department Head.

The awards, which include a $2,500 honorarium and plaque, are sponsored by the K-State president's office and Curtin Property Co., a real estate development firm with offices in Manhattan and Kansas City. The awards are coordinated by the Kansas State University Foundation.

"The Curtin Property Company, and its Manhattan associates at Georgetown Apartment Homes and Westchester Park, are pleased to join with the K-State president's office in recognizing and rewarding these highly talented educators," said Chris Curtin, company president. "Their commitment to the pursuit of
excellence is inspirational to all of us. Each award winner has contributed greatly to undergraduate success at K-State."

"The Presidential Awards acknowledge that the creativity, dedication and excellence of its faculty members are what make a university great," said Jon Wefald, K-State president. "We appreciate that Chris Curtin and the Curtin Property Company continue to help K-State reward such efforts."

* Martin has been lead undergraduate adviser for K-State's department of geography since 2003. "The adviser is the guiding light that illuminates the possibilities of a major, the person who points out the intellectual directions, the possible career paths, the postgraduation options. As an adviser, I am careful to act as an illuminator, not as a filter," Martin said, adding that his primary job is to listen to those he advises. Martin also is director of K-State's secondary major in natural resources and environmental sciences. He has a bachelor's in geography from Dartmouth College, and a master's and Ph.D. in geography from the University of Kansas.

K-STATE GEOGRAPHER WORKING TO CLARIFY WHAT SUSTAINABILITY REALLY MEANS TO RURAL DECISION-MAKERS

MANHATTAN -- From book titles to real estate developments, it's easier to find things claiming to be sustainable than it is to define it.

That's why a Kansas State University geographer is trying to pin down exactly what sustainability means to those who might be trying to work toward it. Her goal is to better understand what is important to people who have to make decisions about what to sustain with the hope that this will later help civic and business leaders in rural communities make more informed decisions about sustainability.

Lisa Harrington is a K-State professor of geography whose interest is in rural geography. She is teaching a K-State class in sustainability science and said one of the big issues in teaching such a course is developing a good sense of what sustainability means and communicating that to students.

"I want to develop a better sense of how people view the term sustainability and develop a better sense of issues and problems that people in rural areas are having related to ideas of sustainability," Harrington said. "Sustainability is broadly applied without always being meaningful. Generally, people try to use it appropriately. It's just that it is a term that's broad enough it can be misused."

For her research, Harrington interviewed civic leaders and resource users in rural Washington and Oregon to get a sense of what sustainability means to them and how they feel about it. Harrington found that some rural leaders have an understanding of sustainability that fits how scholars and professionals define it -- as something that can last into the future. But other rural leaders she interviewed don't like how the term is used or don't understand it.

"Some of the people I interviewed are planners, so they want a really clear definition that they can apply to their work," Harrington said. "I wanted to get a sense of what sorts of problems rural leaders and decision-makers were focusing on and some of the changes and stresses they're experiencing that relate to sustainability."

In the rural Pacific Northwest, Harrington said, the primary industries are fishing, logging and tourism. All of these industries require a balance of sustaining the local economy and sustaining the very environment that makes fishing, logging and tourism viable in the first place. Moreover, Harrington said that the tourism industry raises social sustainability issues like whether service industry workers can afford housing in the communities where they work.
"When people are thinking about sustainability, they can't really sustain everything -- ecologically, socially or economically -- at the same time," she said. "Choices have to be made."

Harrington presented the research in July at the 17th annual Colloquium of the International Geographical Union's Commission on the Sustainability of Rural Systems.

Harrington plans to continue this research elsewhere in the country, including in Kansas. She expects that the specific issues will be different -- for instance, sustaining family farms rather than ocean ecology. But Harrington expects that some of the underlying problems will be the same, including the availability of suitable housing and jobs that pay enough to sustain families.

K-STATE TEAM WINS GEOBOWL TITLE; K-STATE STUDENT WILL BE MEMBER OF DIVISIONAL TEAM COMPETING AT WORLD GEOGRAPHY BOWL

Knowing such facts like destinations along the Silk Road and the position of the sun on the winter solstice has helped a team from Kansas State University win the GeoBowl at the recent annual meeting of the Association of American Geographers Great Plains-Rocky Mountain Division.

"We were very excited to win the division tournament," said Tyra Olstad, a K-State team member and doctoral student in geography from Tonawanda, N.Y. Olstad tied for first place in individual scores for the GeoBowl. She will be on the select team representing the Great Plains-Rocky Mountain Division at the World Geography Bowl, a part of the national meeting of the Association of American Geographers, April 14-18, 2010, in Washington, D.C. The division team is selected from the top individual scorers at the event.

The K-State team was organized by the university's chapter of Gamma Theta Upsilon, the international geography honor society, from volunteers in the department of geography. Along with Olstad, team members included Melissa Belz, doctoral student in geography, Samantha Hartley, master's student in geography, and Colton Youngs, freshman in philosophy, all from Manhattan; and Jim Wells, doctoral student in geography, Averill Park, N.Y.

"The GeoBowl included toss-up questions that ranged from simple location facts -- naming capital cities, bodies of water, relative position of countries, etc. -- to queries about language families, religions, ancient trade routes, ecosystem dynamics, geospatial modeling techniques and even the settings for works of literature," Olstad said.

"Group questions often involved series, for example, naming the states that stretch along the 39th parallel -- Kansas is one of them -- or determining the world's largest rivers by volume -- no one thought of the Rio de la Plata," she said.

When it comes to participating in the national competition, Olstad said she will be ready. "There's really no one way to prepare for the national competition, aside from paying attention to current events and tucking little bits of seemingly esoteric knowledge into the back of your mind, like that the USDA has 12 soil orders and the Republic of Kosovo declared independence last year," she said. "Teaching a section of World Regional Geography in the spring will probably be my best training."

The GeoBowl competition is patterned after the old television show "College Bowl," where each team sits at a table with electronic buzzers that members can each activate if they think they know the answer to a toss-up question. Additional questions also are asked where the team members can confer and answer as a team. To take first place at the divisional level, the K-State team unseated the defending champion team from the University of Wyoming.
NEWS TIP: K-STATE GEOGRAPHER JOHN HARRINGTON JR. SERVING AS AN OFFICIAL OBSERVER AT THIS WEEK'S U.N. CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE

MANHATTAN -- John Harrington Jr., professor of geography at Kansas State University, is serving as an official observer at the U.N. Conference on Global Climate Change, Dec. 7-18, in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Harrington will represent the American Association of Geographers and will be one of approximately 15,000 observers from across the globe. He said that his experience will provide valuable perspective to energy and climate projects affecting Kansas.

Harrington is one of several K-State researchers involved in the Kansas NSF EPSCoR -- or Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research -- project on global change and renewable technology. He said that while he is at the U.N. conference he expects to see a lot of different technologies to address things like greenhouse gases and hopes to bring back perspectives that will help with the EPSCoR project.

FACULTY AND STAFF OF THE GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT

Bimal Paul, David Kromm, Karen DeBres, Jeffrey Smith, Lisa Harrington, Kevin Blake, Richard Marston, Melinda Daniels
Stephen Stover, Kendra McLauchlan, Huber Self, Shawn Hutchinson, Doug Goodin
John Harrington, Charles Martin, Kevin Price, Max Lu
Kathy Zimmerman, Stephen White, Duane Nellis, Charles Bussing, Marcellus Caldas
HOW CAN ALUMNI GET INVOLVED AND SUPPORT K-STATE GEOGRAPHY?

We have been working hard to implement recommendations of the KSU Geography Alumni Board to increase the variety of ways that our alumni can interact with and support the Department of Geography.

1. To keep-up with events and news in the department, take a look at the department’s web site (www.ksu.edu/geography) and click on “K-State Geography in the News” for links to multiple news releases. Also, the weekly Seaton Globe and annual Geography Alumni Newsletter are posted at our departmental website.

2. In recent years, we have hosted a reception for K-State Geography alumni, students and faculty at the AAG Annual Meeting. We will do this once again at the 2010 AAG Meeting in Washington, DC, from 14-18 April. A notice will be sent to everyone on our Alumni email distribution list.

3. Make a donation to support K-State Geography students and/or other department needs. You can do this by sending a check to the K-State Foundation, payable to them, but remember to add a note in the memo line of your check that the funds are to be deposited in account F26200, the Geography Foundation Account. You can mail your check to us and we will make sure it is passed along to the Foundation. Or, mail it directly to the K-State Foundation at 2323 Anderson Drive, Manhattan, KS 66502-2911. You can specify how your donation is to be used, or designate it as discretionary funds to be used where most needed. Our three biggest needs are:
   - Student scholarships: one of the existing named scholarships (see the list elsewhere in this newsletter), or make a donation to be applied to scholarships where most needed.
   - Student development: funds to travel to professional meetings where students present their research, or funds to support student participation in professional development workshops. For example, the Geography Faculty Development Workshop in Boulder, CO, is one workshop each summer that would be of great benefit to our doctoral students but carries a $1200 registration fee.
   - Funds for teaching equipment in our classrooms and labs.

4. Consider a major gift for a new specific purpose that is important to you. For instance, a $30,000 donation will support an annual $1500 student scholarship or award. A $100,000 endowment will support a $5000 annual award for outstanding faculty. A $250,000 endowment would establish a lecture series with $12,500 per year in expendable funds to pay for honoraria, publicity and expenses of guest lecturers in geography. If you would like to make an impact on the Department of Geography you can contact Damon Fairchild, Development Officer for the College of Arts and Sciences at the KSU Foundation, about opportunities and information at 785-532-7524 or damonf@found.ksu.edu.

5. Join us at our annual Spring GTU/Geography Awards Banquet, held on or close to the campus in late April or early May (announcement will be forthcoming via email to alumni).

6. In Spring 2008, the Geography Alumni Board organized a Geography Career Day. Six government agencies and private firms interviewed a large number of students. Alumni gave short presentations to all interested students on resume preparation and interview skills. Consider participating if you are in a position to hire geographers.

7. Visit the department and offer to give a department colloquium or Brown Bag Lunch seminar about your professional or travel experiences.
Please join your fellow K-State Department of Geography alumni and friends for an evening at Alero Mexican Restaurant

2010 AAG Annual Meeting • April 14–18 • Washington, DC
www.aag.org/annualmeetings

Wednesday, April 14, 2010 • Alero Mexican Restaurant
Cleveland Park • 3500 Connecticut Avenue NW • Washington, DC
Visit with Dr. Richard Marston, professor and department head, K-State geography faculty and current students.
Appetizers and cash bar available. Reserve now — seating is limited.
RSVP by April 7: www.found.ksu.edu/geogevent
Questions? Please contact Heather Scott at heathers@found.ksu.edu, 785-532-7603 or 800-432-1578.

GEOGRAPHY AT KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
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Kansas State University Geography Alumni Update Form

We enjoy hearing from you, the Geography Alumni, so please take a few minutes to print and complete the following form, now, before you forget! Your information and comments will be included in the next Alumni Newsletter.

Thank you very much!

Name: ___________________________________ Occupation: ________________________________
Mailing Address: __________________________ Title: ________________________________
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E-mail Address: ___________________________ Other: ________________________________
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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 print and return this form to:
Kathy Zimmerman
Kansas State University
Department of Geography
118 Seaton Hall
Manhattan, KS 66506-2904
E-mail: kzimmerm@ksu.edu and Fax: 785-532-7310