Letter from the Chair 2008

A nother busy year has come and gone. I am preparing to depart for Rocky Mountain Field Studies, then on to my year-long sabbatical.…..

We have had four new faces in the department this year including our new structural geologist, Geoff Pignotta (from Canada), and three visiting assistant professors filling in for a sabbatical and vacancies created by promotions and research/maternity leave. Donald Sidman joined us from U-M Twin Cities as the instructor for our Earth Science class for education majors; we were lucky to find an oceanographer from Univ. of Rhode Island, Paul Hartmann, to fill in during Kent Syverson’s sabbatical; and Bianca Pedersen (from Denmark) is visiting us for two years to help replace Katherine Grote who is on a combined maternity and research leave of absence. Jill Ferguson joined the science faculty as a research technician and has been working primarily in the analytical geochemistry laboratory on our new Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometer. The department has been working with the other sciences at Eau Claire to promote an interdisciplinary Materials Science program, an exciting addition to the science building.

It was my pleasure to announce the first recipients of the Myers/Willis Field Camp Scholarship at the geology banquet this spring (see separate news item). Before announcing the recipients, I recounted how Paul Myers and Ron Willis worked so hard to establish our field-based geology program. Where has the time gone? In any case, we strive to continue the excellence started “back in the Precambrian years of the department,” as Paul Myers likes to say! We hope to award multiple field camp scholarships each year to defray parts of field camp expenses (ever rising because of gas prices). I urge you to donate to this cause, and it is a great way to honor Paul and Ron as well.

The numbers of geology majors is holding steady but the demand for geologists in the mining and petroleum sectors is currently very strong. If students were more aware of the great job opportunities in geology, I am sure our courses would be flooded. This semester we have placed several students in mining and mineral exploration positions, as well as the always-strong environmental sector.

We also have had several alumni return to the department to give seminars this year, and it is a real testament to the quality of the program when one sees how successful many of our recent graduates are within the profession.

As always, please stop by the department to visit when you are in town. We would love to show you around. I probably won’t be around much next year, but I leave the department in good hands as I go on my sabbatical!

Sincerely,

Dr. Brian Mahoney receives the UWEC Excellence in Scholarship Award

(slightly modified from the University Bulletin, August 21, 2007).

J. Brian Mahoney, a member of the geology faculty since 1994, received the Excellence in Scholarship Award. In 13 years, he’s established a nationally and internationally recognized, externally funded geology research program. Mahoney has authored or coauthored 80 research articles, and he has been an invited presenter at three Geological Society of America Penrose conferences, including the 1999 conference in Winthrop, WA, for which he was the principal organizer. Mahoney has supervised master’s theses for several UWEC geology alumni who continued on to graduate school, and he has been a faculty mentor for 68 student/faculty collaborative research projects with UWEC students. He’s acquired more than $1.3 million in external research funds, including awards from the government of British Columbia, the U.S. Geological Survey, the University of Wisconsin Technology Initiative, and the National Science Foundation.

(Elaborate, please)
Spring break trip 2008 – Argentina
by J. Brian Mahoney

The 2008 Geologic Field Excursion (Geology 343) was a geologic and cultural exploration of the Andes Mountains in western Argentina. Pre-trip planning included studying the geologic evolution of the southern Andes and the history and culture of the Mendoza region of western Argentina. The course culminated in an 11-day trip to Argentina involving 14 students, 3 faculty members (JBM, LDS, RLH), Bob’s wife, Ginger, a professor from UCLA (Oscar Lovera), and a Ph.D. student from the University of Minnesota (Stacia Gordon). The trip was based out of Mendoza, a wonderful colonial town founded by the Spanish in 1561 in a region traditionally inhabited by the Huarpe and Inca. Mendoza sits on the leading edge of the main fold and thrust belt that is actively uplifting the Andes. There is a spectacularly exposed fault scarp running right through the city! The area is fascinating geologically because it straddles the boundary between normal slab subduction to the south and flat slab subduction to the north, a tectonic situation directly analogous to the Cretaceous of North America.

Andean expert Victor Ramos of the Laboratorio de Tectónica Andina at the Universidad de Buenos Aires, and his colleague, Laura Giambiagi of the CONICET research institute, provided an outstanding introduction to the region with a tour of the Rio Mendoza corridor on the first day of the trip. We then spent nine days on a circular tour of the eastern flank of the Andes, examining the principal geologic regions of the area, including the Precordillera, Frontal Cordillera, and the high mountains of the Principal Cordillera. The scenery was astounding, and the geology beyond fascinating – fold and thrust belts, foreland basins, ophiolites, metamorphic core complexes, Andean volcanoes…the list goes on! Quite an experience!

The group spent a couple of days detailing and sampling a stratigraphic section in the Uspallata basin, a Miocene foreland basin. This basin is the subject of new provenance studies detailing the tectonic evolution of the area. More on this over the next couple of years! The last two days were devoted to a whitewater raft trip on the Rio Mendoza, followed by a full-day tour of three bodegas (wineries) in the Mendoza area, the world capital of Malbec! Everyone had a great time and an unforgettable geologic and cultural adventure!
Field Camp I — Kingston, New Mexico
By Brian Mahoney

Field Camp I was once again a rousing success, and the UWEC cohort had a great time cavorting in the mountains of New Mexico in the dead of the Wisconsin winter! Twelve students, including one transplant from San Diego State University, braved the harsh New Mexico desert and lived to tell the tale. The course was led by J.B. Mahoney, but Hooper, Snyder and the new guy, Geoff Pignotta, cycled through and provided critical input. Geoff is our new structural geologist, and he dove in to see how our Field Camp system works. He was a welcome addition, despite the fact he brought some as-yet-to-be-discovered form of typhoid to infect the entire camp! The weather was terrific, particularly compared to the snow storms of last year, and the New Mexico desert was once again most glorious. We probably could have done without the gale-force winds at the top of the stratigraphic section, but what is life without a little adventure? Yes, the Caballo Mountains are still steep, Apache Gap is still confusing, Rattlesnake is still a big area, and Trujillo is still magical….some things you just have to love about New Mexico!

UW-Eau Claire Chancellor Levin-Stankevich (left) spent a day at the New Mexico field camp learning about innovative teaching/learning experiences within the geology program. Here Brian Mahoney gives the chancellor some geology pointers…!

Tell us what you are doing so we can include you in our next newsletter.

Please send updates to Kent Syverson (syverskm@uwec.edu) or Lorilie Steinke (steinklm@uwec.edu) via email or the snail mail address below.

Return to:
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MacLaurin and Kjos Presented the “Excellence in Geology” Award in 2006-2007

The “Excellence in Geology” Award recognizes the academic achievements of the outstanding graduating geology major, both in coursework and in faculty/student collaborative research. The winners of the Geology Excellence Award for 2006-2007 were Kate MacLaurin and Adam Kjos.

Kate MacLaurin
(written by J. Brian Mahoney)
Kate MacLaurin from Fredonia, WI, earned the excellence in geology award based on her research excellence in both field and laboratory projects in Montana and British Columbia.

In Montana, Kate cut her teeth mapping with Brian Mahoney and Phil Ihinger in the Devil’s Fence anticlinorium, and led our first detrital zircon studies of the Precambrian/Cambrian boundary. Kate then joined our mapping team on a regional bedrock mapping project in the southern Whitesail Lake area in British Columbia, and she was instrumental in geochemical and geochronologic analysis of plutonic assemblages in the region. Kate has moved on to an M.Sc. project at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, B.C. She is analyzing Cretaceous sedimentology and stratigraphy in south-central British Columbia.

Adam Kjos
(written by J. Brian Mahoney)
Adam Kjos of New London, WI, was awarded the excellence in geology award based on his research excellence involving field and laboratory projects in Montana and British Columbia. In Montana, Adam worked with Brian Mahoney and Phil Ihinger on geologic mapping and stratigraphic analysis of Precambrian and Lower Paleozoic rocks within the Devil’s Fence anticlinorium. This EDMAP funded project resulted in a presentation at the fall 2007 national GSA. Adam also was part of a research team on a regional bedrock mapping project in the southern Whitesail Lake area in British Columbia and conducted associated geochemical analyses. Adam is currently working on an M.S. project at San Diego State University involving mapping and a stratigraphic analysis of Jurassic sediments in the Vizcaino basin of Baja del Sur, Mexico.

Amanda LaGesse became the first two-time winner of the excellence in service award in 2007 – a much-deserved honor! Amanda grew up on a dairy farm in Bloomer, WI. Her work ethic was demonstrated by her willingness to help out around the department and on field trips. Amanda served as an officer in the Geology Club, worked as a laboratory technician, and helped around the department with whatever was needed. Amanda graduated in 2007 and is employed as a lab technician for Archer Daniels Midland Corp. in Stanley, WI. Congratulations to Amanda and best wishes for continued success in the future!

FORMER EXCELLENCE AWARD RECIPIENTS:
1995-1996: Kristin Weaver and Chad Underwood
1996-1997: Sarah Weaver and Mark Holmes
1997-1998: Tom Danielson and Michelle Haskin
1998-1999: Mae Willkom and Beth Wenell
1999-2000: Jean Morrison and Carrie Rowe
2000-2001: Katie Thornburg and Karl Beaster
2002-2003: Sarah Gordee and Ben Paulson
2003-2004: Laura Strumness and Mark Ciardelli
2004-2005: Jessica Lopez and James Watkins
2005-2006: Gillian (Jill) Krezoski and Christopher Kohel

FORMER SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS
2003-2004: Sarah Prindiville
2004-2005: Christina Piper
2005-2006: Amanda LaGesse

Amanda LaGesse wins 2007 Annual Award for Service

Calling All UWEC Geology Alumni!

National GSA is going to be in Minneapolis from October 9-12, 2011. Sounds like a great excuse to hold a UWEC Geology alumni reunion at the meeting! We held a party associated with NC GSA in Minneapolis in spring 2005, and that was a lot of fun. Certainly we would want the 2011 gathering to be bigger and better!

Mark Those Dates on Your Calendar!

If you have a choice where to present a paper that year, plan to present at GSA in Minneapolis. We will plan the gathering for an establishment outside of the meeting venue so people living in the Eau Claire/MSP orbit can attend without registering for the meeting.

Obviously this is a ways down the road. But it is always good to plant ideas early....
Amdahl, Nancy (Program Assistant 1995-2005). We went on an absolutely awesome 7-day Alaskan cruise last July! Besides enjoying the beautiful scenery from our ship, we also took a helicopter ride up to the glaciers, and we did a guided fishing trip and caught a bunch of Red Snapper, baby sharks, and even one halibut! The cruise line personnel treated us like royalty—we were so spoiled by the time we returned home! One of my favorite daily treats was the fresh-baked cookies and glass of milk they delivered to us in the outdoor hot tub every afternoon! I know, cold Alaska and hot tubs don’t sound like an appealing combination, but it was perfect! We also just returned from a vacation in California. We toured Alcatraz, toured a few wineries in Napa Valley, drove along the coast on Highway 1, and also drove through the Redwood Forest, Sequoia and Yosemite National Parks. Thanks to those of you who continue to keep in touch—I always enjoy hearing from you! Take care!

Ian & Christina (Piper) Anderson (2004). Ian and Christina were married in February 2007 in Costa Rica. Ian is a geologist/project manager with BJAAM, an environmental firm in Canal Fulton, OH, and Christina is working as a geologist with Burgess & Niple, an engineering firm in Akron, OH. They write, “It’s pretty rewarding to see a site turn from an old abandoned industrial area to a trailhead, or better yet, a new office building that will help create jobs in the area…”

Cale Anger (2007). Cale will attend the University of Minnesota in fall 2008 to begin a master’s degree in hydrogeology. He plans to develop a research project related to the modeling of contaminant migration in fractured karst terrains.

Ryan Bartingale (2006). Ryan is working on his master’s degree in Geological Engineering at Colorado School of Mines. For his thesis he is creating a new Colorado Rockfall Simulation Program (CRSP) which estimates rockfall characteristics such as bounce height, rock velocity, and kinetic energy. He writes that “CRSP is used to estimate rockfall hazard potential and to determine the type of mitigation needed to protect structures from rockfall.”

Karl Beaster (2001). Karl is working as a hydrogeologist at American Engineering Testing, Inc. Karl writes, “In September 2007 we had our third child, another girl, Camilla. Emelyn and Grace, the twins, are 3½ now and love being the “older sisters.”

Greg Beckstrom (1984). Greg is the Minnesota Operations Manager for Golder Associates. He is managing the Duluth and Minneapolis/St. Paul offices. He writes “On a personal front, a few of you have been tracking the Beckstrom family’s progress to see baseball games in all of the major league ballparks. We have surpassed twenty thus far, having visited Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Philadelphia and Denver in 2007. This summer we will see games at Yankee Stadium and Shea Stadium in New York City.”

Jennifer Broski (Tobias) (1996). Jenna is a hydrogeologist for the Wisconsin DNR. She began working part-time in April to spend more time with her family. She writes, “When not changing diapers, reading board books and cutting food into easily dissolved pieces, I’m at work and still loving what I do. I am excited to be working on the cleanup and redevelopment of a 15-acre property with metals, VOC, and PAH contamination along 1000 feet of riverfront. The property dating back to the 1800s was once used as a former paper mill and mud-drilling fluid business. The old hydroelectric facility will soon be restarted and provide 100% of the power to the site with extra to spare. Even more exciting is that the redevelopment is Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Neighborhood Design (ND) certified by the U.S. Green Building Council (meaning it’s energy efficient, using renewable energy, and focusing on community integration). I anticipate great success with the redevelopment and hope other developers are encouraged to pursue contaminated properties. Cleaning up the world, one site at a time…”

Graduates Andy Thompson, Dave Kawatski, and Lynn Galston. (Jeremy Hinke is being shy in the background…!)
Kirsten Cahow-Scholtes (1997). Kristin is back in Eau Claire working as the Eau Claire County Land Conservation Supervisor. She returned to Eau Claire after working for seven years as the Water Program Manager for the Bad River Natural Resources Department. She is married and has two children ages 2½ and 10 months.

Scott Galetka (1998). Scott is employed as a Land Records Administrator in Bayfield County. He has been working on collecting data for Wireless E-911. He recently submitted a coastal management grant for acquiring LiDAR along the shoreline to generate 2' contours. Scott is also involved in creating a new plat book for 2008.

Kristen Gunderson (1995). Kristen writes, “I am still at RMT, still working on the house, and still sailing as much as I can.” She obtained her motorcycle license last year and is looking forward to getting a bike.

Doug Hallum (1996). Doug is a hydrogeologist working on ground-water modeling for the Nebraska DNR in Lincoln, NE. He recently passed the professional geologist exam.

Morgan Herrick (2005). Morgan completed his M.S. in geology at UW-Madison, thesis entitled “Isotopic studies of the 3.7-3.8 Ga Isua banded iron formation provide insight into Early Archean geochemical cycles.”

Steve Hoaglund (2007). Steve is attending graduate school in the Geology Dept. at the University of Minnesota-Duluth. Last summer he attended UMD’s six-week Precambrian geology field camp held in northern Minnesota.

Dave Hodek (1995). Dave has accepted a position as a Senior Environmental Analyst with Enbridge Energy in Superior, WI. This pipeline company transports raw crude and natural gas liquids from Canada to the US. Dave will be overseeing environmental issues for the construction of a new line from Minnesota to the border.

Tony Jones (1992). Tony is running his own land surveying business in Rhinelander, WI. He also works with ArcMap GIS software to do parcel mapping for Oneida County. He has embarked on a new hobby of outhouse excavating! His daughter Ashley is a freshman at Rhinelander High School, daughter Megan is in the second grade, son Nicolas is five and will be starting kindergarten this fall, and Olivia is two. He adds, “It’s a full house and it’s always full of fun.”

Adam Kjos (2007). Adam is attending graduate school at San Diego State University.

Josh Kohn (2001). Josh purchased a house in the spring of 2007 in St. Paul, MN. He and his girlfriend returned in February from a trip to Peru where they hiked the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu, and also did the Santa Cruz trek in the Cordillera Blanca. He is working for a company that installs underground utilities. He is considering going back to school in the next few years for a teaching certificate in high school physics or earth science.


Stephanie Larsen (2001). Steph writes, “I currently direct the policy program at the Community Food Security Coalition, where I advocate for positive changes in sustainable agriculture, food access, nutrition, and local food issues. It has been an interesting experience living in Washington DC, seeing how government works (or doesn’t), and teaching others how to interact with legislators. Recent trips have taken me to Venezuela, Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, British Columbia, and all over the U.S. This summer, I look forward to hiking in Shenandoah, visiting my farmers’ market, and planting my own garden!”

Amanda LaGesse (2007). Amanda is employed as a lab technician for Archer Daniels Midland Corp. in Stanley, WI. She also adds, “I would like to thank the professors in the Department of Geology for all of their assistance and knowledge they have freely shared with many, including myself. I wish you and everyone else well.”


Taryn Lopez (2003). Taryn is in the second year of her PhD program at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks. Last summer she went to Russia and collected gas measurements at Bezymianny volcano. Then in September she assisted with the Alaska Volcano Observatory’s eruption response at Pavlof volcano in the Aleutian Islands. She adds, “I ran into Bob Hooper at AGU this year. That was a lot of fun and allowed me to get caught up on UWEC Geology news.”

Kate MacLaurin (2007). Kate is working on her master’s degree in geology at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia.

David Mans (2005). After graduating with his B.Sc. at UWEC, he completed an M.Sc. at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada. His master’s thesis was on the sedimentology and micropaleontology of the Viking and Shaffesbury Formations in western Canada. He graduated with distinction in 2007 from Carleton University and then moved to Calgary, Alberta. He is looking for new oil and gas plays while in the exploration department at Husby Energy.

Sarah (Mindel) Stanwicks (2001). After graduating from UWEC, Sarah received her Library Graduate Degree at UW-Madison and got a job as the Map and Geospatial Data Librarian at the University of Connecticut Libraries. She and her husband have recently moved to Albany, NY, where he is employed as the Head of Circulation and Media Services at the University at Albany Libraries.

Paul Overlien (1994). Paul is a hydrogeologist with Shaw Environmental.

Michael Palet (1996). Michael is employed as a financial services professional with New York Life Insurance Company in Chicago, IL.

(Alumni News continued on page 13)
JILL FERGUSON, Analytical Scientist and Laboratory Manager
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My second year in Eau Claire has been an exciting and productive one. I continue to work with Brian Mahoney and Bob Hooper on several projects, including research involving rare earth element geochemistry of rocks and heavy-metal transport in sediments. I have also helped Bianca Pedersen with some Lake Altoona water analyses and done some rare earth element investigations for Phil Ihinger. It has been enjoyable to work with some motivated students on these projects and continue my introduction to geology through elemental analysis.

In between these projects, I work with faculty from other departments (primarily Physics, Geography, Chemistry, and Environmental Public Health) to advance their research using ICP-MS, XRF, and SEM/EDS (elemental analysis and microscopy techniques). Our instrumentation and expertise have attracted the attention of faculty at several large research universities, and we continue to analyze water and rock samples for them as requested. I also work with local companies, providing them with data to refine production processes, develop new products, and identify the sources of product defects. Collaborations with alumni are always enjoyable, so please stop by or drop me an e-mail if I can be of service.

KATHERINE GROTE, Assistant Professor
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It’s been another interesting year at UWEC. I am on maternity leave from teaching, but am still very active in research. Eight students have been busy with our hydrogeophysics project to characterize soil properties using ground penetrating radar. Last summer Cale Anger (2007), Anna Baker (2009), and Bridget Kelly (2009) helped construct a large experimental tank, and we began data collection and analysis at the end of the summer. We’ve continued throughout the school year, and five brave new students joined our team this fall and spring. Cale, Anna, and Bridget presented their research results at the December AGU meeting and won an award for an “Outstanding Student Poster.” I am very proud of them, especially since they were competing against graduate students for this distinction. In March, Taylor Crist (2011), Crystal Nickell (2010), and Herald Schulz (2009) presented at the annual Wisconsin Ground Water Association conference, where they won first and second prizes for student posters. Again, I am proud! It is great to work with such dedicated and talented students. Our two newest students, Bryan Hardel (2009) and Brian Jordan (2008) are working hard and presenting at UWEC poster day this year.

Although I sometimes laugh when people ask how I am liking my “break,” I am enjoying my time on the home front. My new daughter had her first birthday this spring and is keeping us busy as we try to keep up with her. My son started kindergarten and extracurricular activities this year, so I am discovering the joys of being a “soccer mom” in between trips to the lab.

PAIL HART-MANN, Visiting Assistant Professor
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I joined UW-Eau Claire Geology in August 2007 to teach oceanography, physical geology, and geomorphology as a sabbatical replacement for Kent Syverson. Oceanography was the natural course for me to teach having received my Ph.D. in that field from the University of Rhode Island in 2001. The focus of my graduate work was studying organic contaminants in estuarine sediments. My postdoctoral research took me a long way from the ocean to Zurich, Switzerland, where I spent 5½ years at the Swiss Federal Institute for Environmental Science and Technology. While there, I studied contaminants in indoor air, fish declines in Swiss rivers, degradation of flame retardant chemicals in sewage sludge, and conducted environmental assessment of contaminants in rivers and lakes. After returning from Switzerland, I spent a semester at Norwich University in Vermont, where I taught oceanography and introduction to geology.

UWEC has been a great opportunity for me. There are many resources for improving my teaching skills, and the other faculty members have been very helpful. It was a big adjustment when I stepped into Phillips 007 for the first time with 160 students in oceanography compared to the 17 in my class at Norwich. I feel like I am finally getting the hang of teaching in the big classrooms. Prior to coming here I had never spent any time in this part of the country, so this has provided me an opportunity to learn about the geology of an unfamiliar area. The highlight of the fall semester was bringing Geol 345 and Geol 110 students to Crystal Cave because it was both fun and educational. As the semester draws to a close, I will leave here with good memories and a wealth of experience that will serve me well in the future. I hope my students benefited as much as I did.

Hartmann, Burkhart-Holm & Giger, 2007, Occurrence of Polybrominated Diphenyl Ethers (PBDEs) in brown trout bile and liver from Swiss rivers: Environmental Pollution, v. 146, no. 1, p. 107-113.


KAREN HAVHOLM, Assistant Vice Chancellor of Research
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I am still working in the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs full-time, now on a permanent basis. I am kept pretty busy over there, but I try to get over to the department for seminars whenever I can. Senior Lynn Galston and I spent a little time back up in the Apostle Islands last summer looking for more trace fossils in the Keweenawan Rift Devils Island Sandstone (in the Bayfield Group). We did find an additional slab with specimens, but no new localities. Dr. Stephen Hasiotis, a trace fossil expert from the University of Kansas, came to visit in February and confirmed that what we have are indeed trace fossils: trails of two sizes and possibly some evidence of algae also. This means either the Devils Island Sandstone is not from the Middle Proterozoic, or we have fairly rare mid-Proterozoic trace fossils. Lynn is working on posters for upcoming presentations at North-Central GSA, UW-Eau Claire Research Day, and the Institute for Lake Superior Geology.

ROBERT HOOPER, Professor
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I am still Chair of the department (this is my 18th year as Chair) but I have recently been awarded a full-year sabbatical leave and will be stepping down as Chair for the 2008-09 academic-year. I can hardly wait! Brian Mahoney graciously has agreed to take over the position of Chair for the next year while I spend time concentrating on research. Phil Ihinger is teaching the fall 2008 mineralogy and Petrology course in my absence, and
Bianca Pedersen (visiting assistant professor) will be teaching the aqueous geochemistry course in the spring. I appreciate each of these colleagues who have stepped in to allow me a year off from teaching and administration. It remains to be seen if I can actually take a year off and not get involved in university activities. (Editor’s note—he had better take the year off!)

I remain very active in campus planning and campus governance as I try to enhance educational opportunities for our students. The sabbatical comes at a great time in my career because our children are now living independently—this frees up some of the cash Ginger and I used to support their college educations! Ginger and I plan to spend some of the sabbatical in Europe and hopefully some of the sabbatical in Australia as well. However, most of the sabbatical will be devoted to working on the Transmission Electron Microscope in Eau Claire and writing up some of those projects that never quite made it into print. I have resurrected some research on clays over the past year and continue to look at natural nano-particles in low-temperature environments.

I still organize lots of field trips for students whenever possible! I led two field trips for Min/Pet, participated in the winter field camp in New Mexico, and co-led the Rocky Mountain course that Lori Snyder and I now share. In addition, both Ginger and I attended the spring break field trip to Argentina (March 2008) to examine a cross-section through the south-central Andes, a classic convergent margin. I still enjoy skiing, purchased a new graphite composite road-bike (it weighs about as much as a feather pillow) and have been walking Tourmaline (the dog) several miles every day to get exercise. I remain in good physical health but may have adopted a few traits of the traditional absent-minded professor.

PHILLIP IHINGER, Professor

Greetings UWEC alumni! I am back from a spectacular year on sabbatical in which I traveled the world, gave talks at meetings in the Italian Alps, Sweden, and at the foot of the Grand Teton Mountains, as well as at the University of North Carolina, Arizona State University, and the University of California at Berkeley. It was a whirlwind tour, spreading the good gospel on quartz growth, the origin of the Rocky Mountains, and a provocative new mantle convection model. Needless to say, I would do it again if I could. Meanwhile, I’m happy to be back in Phillips Hall teaching Min/Pet II to our enthusiastic majors in our refurbished petrography laboratory. My 15 students are all gazing through their respective microscopes exploring the textures of metamorphic and igneous rocks, many of which were collected by you alumni over the years! This semester I am also teaching Global Environmental Change, as well as a section of the Introductory Geology course. The teaching has kept me very busy, and my wife has been on her own sabbatical (in France) these last two months… Thus, I have had little time to devote to the focused writing that continues to call me. My three-year-old Evie, my seven-year-old Mati, and my high school senior Ghislaine, fill my life with incalculable joy, though we are all looking forward to spring’s belated arrival so we can finally get outside and stretch our legs!

I hope to see many of you at GSA and AGU this coming fall, as I return to my normal routine.

J. BRIAN MAHONEY, Professor

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These newsletters are getting a bit annoying, as I would swear it was about three months since Kent Syverson harassed me for the last one. However, it only takes a moment of reflection to realize it has been an event-filled year that once again makes me proud of the high-quality program and excellent students that typify our department. It has been a year of adventure, to say the least, and no doubt many more will follow!

My ongoing detrital zircon work in British Columbia and Baja continues, with several side roads into other projects. This is the last year of our funding, and we are in a major write-up phase at this point. Our work has led to some very interesting findings about the Cretaceous evolution of the western Cordilleran margin, and is leading us to new studies in the southern Andes. I keep telling you people that sediments are the key to the history of this planet…if only you would listen.

The Montana EDMAP project that Phil Ihinger and I have been working on for several years continued this year, and we moved to a new map area on the northern end of the Boulder Batholith, west of Helena. Michelle Forgette, Alex Guy, and Liz Balgord joined us on the mapping project this year, and we have made significant strides in our regional coverage and understanding of the area. We have increased dramatically the number of new U-Pb ages in the batholith and its volcanic cover, and we are deep into a heretical investigation of the apparently long-misunderstood Precambrian/Cambrian contact.

Should be interesting…

This year I started a major two-year Geoscience BC project targeting the facies distribution and hydrocarbon reservoir potential of Cretaceous strata in south-central British Columbia. This is a joint project with Peter Mustard at Simon Fraser University, and one of the lead investigators is our very own Kate Mac-Laurin, who is now working on a M.Sc. project at SFU. We were joined by Michelle Forgette, Alex Guy, and Liz Balgord, who provided excellent field assistance, and have been very active in post-field season laboratory analyses. Most of the region is quite remote, and we spent way, way too much money on helicopters last year—seems that some of the crew was a bit paranoid about bad weather! Michelle will present the results of her analysis of the Mt. Tatlow strata at the Canadian Society of Petroleum Geologists meeting in May 2008.

On the academic side of life, the University has been undergoing a major Strategic Planning exercise over the past year, and many exciting new initiatives are developing. These include new small-section Gateway courses to invigorate new freshmen, and innovative immersion experiences involving multiple faculty members and a learning community of students in distant locales. I am developing a new experience in Argentina to integrate geology, biology, economics, history and culture in a semester-long immersion experience in fall 2009. Care to join us?

The geology market is just booming! The demand for new geologists is simply overwhelming in all areas of the geosciences, from resource extraction to environmental remediation. Lots and lots of jobs out there, and our students are actively positioning themselves for the broad array of opportunities that await them!

Lastly, I was honored with the UWEC Excellence in Scholarship award this year. It was a pleasant surprise, to say the least, but I immediately recognized how my interested and motivated research students led to this honor. I would like to thank everyone who I have had the pleasure to work with over the past number of years, and you should know that this award actually belongs to you. My thanks to you all.


GEOFFREY PIGNOTTA, Assistant Professor
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I am absolutely thrilled to join the Department of Geology here in Eau Claire as the new structural geologist. My wife, Tania, and I arrived in Eau Claire last August after spending our time in Los Angeles, CA, where I completed my Ph.D., post-doctoral research, and some teaching at the University of Southern California. I completed my undergraduate degree at the University of Ottawa in Canada. So yes, I knew what the weather was going to be like here in Eau Claire, although I’m not sure most people truly were prepared for the winter that we just experienced.

This year has been busy and filled with adventure. After the long move and some settling in, I taught several sections of physical geology my first semester here. It was great getting out in the Eau Claire area with the other faculty and my students on numerous field trips to examine the fine local geology. I also joined the Mineralogy-Petrology class for trips to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan to look at Mid-Continent Rift geology and to South Dakota for some Black Hills geology. Both trips were fantastic! During Winterim I went to New Mexico with the Field Camp I crow and spent a couple of weeks mapping and enjoying the geology and scenery of New Mexico. This spring I am teaching a couple more sections of physical geology, anxiously awaiting the weather to improve so I can get out in the field again with my students. Despite the fact that I am a structural geologist, this spring is the first time I have taught structural geology. I am having a great time teaching and learning. I’m also very excited to be taking my structural geology class to the Ouachita Mountains in Arkansas.

My research interests revolve around the construction and evolution of continental margin magmatic arcs and orogenic belts. The main focus of my recent research has been the Sierra Nevada Batholith, CA, but I am actively pursuing research projects in the North American Cordillera from Baja, Mexico, to British Columbia. For the immediate future, I am continuing research in the Jackass Lakes pluton. This unique magmatic system in the Sierra Nevada Batholith has numerous potential undergraduate research projects related to magma chamber evolution, emplacement problems, magmatic fabric development, and the structural evolution of its metavolcanic host rock. In fact, Anne Gauer and Heidi Stanek have undertaken research with me in the Jackass Lakes pluton investigating geochemical links between magmatic increments in the pluton and the volcanic host rocks. I am excited that they are presenting their research at the UW-Eau Claire Student Research Day this spring. I look forward to getting more students involved in structural geology research in the upcoming years as my research program develops.

DONALD SIDMAN,
Visiting Assistant Professor
sidmandj@uwec.edu

It has been a pleasure to be a part of the Geology Department at UWEC during the 2007-2008 academic year. Although this is my first chance to contribute to the yearly newsletter, it also marks my departure from the Geology Department, as I have accepted another one-year teaching position in the Geology Department at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, WA, starting this fall.

I am very thankful for the experience and support I have received here in Eau Claire, and I have enjoyed the challenge of teaching Earth Science (Geol 106) to education majors for two semesters. While always a pleasure to instruct young minds, this course has been especially interesting because of the many opportunities for local field trips. The best place for students to learn about geologic processes is in the field.

Although this is my first lecturer position, my graduate research at the University of Minnesota gave me many chances to instruct both geology majors and non-majors in classroom, laboratory, and field settings. Teaching Geology 106 is exciting because I get to teach in all three of these settings, and hopefully, I get to make a difference in the future of elementary science education.

To give you a bit of background about myself, I completed my bachelor’s degree in geology in 1998 at Kansas State University, my M.S. in 2001 at the University of Minnesota, and I am still working on my Ph.D. dissertation at the University of Minnesota. Although my research interests are somewhat broad, my Ph.D. research has focused on the uplift of high-pressure rocks in the Franciscan Complex of California.

I thank all of the faculty and staff in the Geology Department here at UW-Eau Claire for their suggestions, help, and support during the past year. This teaching opportunity has increased my confidence and love of teaching. I especially thank Lorilie Steinke, without whom field trips would never happen, and Phil Ilder, who always makes...
The Geology funds with UW-Eau Claire Foundation are used to support a wide range of activities in the Department including student travel to professional meetings, faculty/student field trips, faculty recruitment, and student scholarships. The attached slip is intended to make it easy to contribute to the Geology funds. Please be assured that your gift will be greatly appreciated and it will be used effectively within the Department. In addition to financial support, we also welcome and encourage your support by volunteering to speak to our majors/minors about your job experiences, offering possible job opportunities to our students, or by the donation of equipment or field supplies.

Due to state budget cuts and increasing gasoline prices, alumni gifts to the department’s advancement funds are becoming increasingly critical. Therefore, we have been working with the Foundation Office to learn more about establishing a named lecture series, new scholarships, etc. If you would happen to be interested in establishing a scholarship within the Department of Geology, here are a few basic guidelines from the Foundation Office:

- All gifts to the UWEC Foundation are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. You may use cash, checks, credit cards, stocks or other tangible assets to fund a scholarship.
- There are two types of scholarships: the annual scholarship, which is funded each year, and the endowed scholarship, where principal is invested and only the income is used for the annual scholarship award.
- A minimum commitment of $500 is required to establish an annual scholarship fund.
- A minimum investment of $10,000 is required to establish an endowed fund; there is no maximum.
- The name of the scholarship is determined by the donor(s). Most name a scholarship after their family or the name of a loved or honored one. Some have endowed scholarships in the name of a favorite professor.
- The donor(s) may help develop scholarship criteria with the assistance of a development officer. Preferences rather than requirements are most often expressed. Preferences may involve academic major, financial need, international study, academic promise, first-year student or upper-division status.
- IRS regulations prevent donors from designating family members as recipients or from selecting the recipients themselves. Donors may be notified of the finalists and will be notified of the recipients.

If you would like more information about establishing an annual or endowed scholarship, please feel free to contact the Foundation Office at 715/836-5630. We ask that if the UWEC Foundation Office calls you asking for a donation, please remember the Geology Advancement funds! If you work for a corporation or a geology-related firm, please inquire if your company has a matching program for contributions to academic geology departments.

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**DONATION SLIP**

University of Wisconsin Eau Claire Foundation, Inc.

________ Yes, I wish to support the Geology Department through my tax-deductible gift of

$________ (if check is used and enclosed, make payable to UW-Eau Claire Foundation, Inc.)

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Please indicate below how you wish your contribution to be recorded:

_____Record jointly with my spouse (Spouse’s name)_______________________

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_____In memory of _________________________________________________

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_____My employer (or my spouse’s) will match this gift. Employer:___________________

_____I have made plans to benefit the Geology Department through my estate. Please have someone contact me.

_____Please send me information about how I might make provisions in my estate to benefit the Geology Department.

Mailing Address: UW-Eau Claire Foundation, Schofield Hall 214, 105 Garfield Ave, Eau Claire, WI 54702-4004. Or give immediately by going to http://www.uwec.edu/fndn/giving.htm

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Our Geology Department Advancement Fund is the primary support fund for the department. It is used to support a wide range of activities in the Department including student travel to national meetings, special research and instructional equipment, faculty recruitment, and the seminar program. If you choose, your gift can also be applied in part or total to individual scholarship award funds. See information above for minimum commitments for establishing your own scholarship. Undesignated funds will be credited to the Geology Department Advancement Fund.

### Funds

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Earth Science Seminar Series

The Earth Science Seminar Series has been a wonderful addition to the Geology Department. The seminar, co-sponsored with the Geography Department, has brought excellent speakers to campus. It provides faculty and students with the opportunity to interact with other scientists working on a broad range of research topics, and it also allows us to “show off” our department and research equipment to the visitors….! Below are the talks presented during this academic year. Seminars for next fall will be posted at http://www.uwec.edu/jolhm/Seminar_Series/. In addition, if you live in the area and would like to receive e-mail announcements about upcoming seminars, please contact Dr. Garry Running at runningg@uwec.edu. If you work for a company that would like to sponsor the seminar series or contribute money to defray speaker costs, please contact us!

Kate Pound, Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, St. Cloud State University, "From Beads and Beakers to Walthers Law: Tabletop Transgressions and Regressions – Hands-on, Inquiry-Based Learning for Undergraduates," 9/14/07.

Christina Hupy, Department of Geography and Anthropology, UWEC, "Ecotone Dynamics: 2000 Years of Change in the Lower Peninsula of Michigan, USA," 9/21/07.


Kate MacLaurin (UWEC Geology 2007), Department of Earth Sciences, Simon Fraser University, "A Preliminary Assessment of the Sedimentology and Stratigraphy of the Lower Cretaceous Jackass Mountain Group, Chilko Lake area, British Columbia," 2/29/08.


Heather Hill, Department of Geological Sciences, University of Michigan, "AptOnly Climate Change during the Last Ice Age," 3/13/08.

Matthew Nisbet, School of Communication, American University, "Consensus and Conflict in Communicating about Science," 3/27/08.

Matthew Nisbet, School of Communication, American University, "Framing Science-Research Talks," 3/28/08.


Doug Hallum (UWEC Geology 1996), Nebraska Department of Natural Resources, "Streambed Elevation Uncertainty and Implications for Modeling Stream Baseflow," 5/2/08.

Rob Nurre, Wisconsin Board of Commissioners of Public Land, "The Surlly Surveyor," 5/9/08.


Geoffrey Pignotta, Department of Geology, UWEC, "Magma Chamber Construction and Evolution in the Sierra Nevada Batholith: Constraints from the Jackass Lakes Pluton," 2/22/08.


Baker and Balgord win first Myers/Willis Field Camp Scholarships

Anna Baker, a senior from Eau Claire, and Liz Balgord, a junior from Middleton, WI, each have been awarded $150 Myers/Willis Field Camp Scholarships to defray Field Camp II costs in Montana this summer. This is the first time the scholarship has been awarded in the department. Congratulations, Anna and Liz!

Field camp experiences have become increasingly expensive for students. This scholarship, established by the department in 2006, is intended to lessen the financial burden of field camp for excellent students who also have financial need. The scholarship also honors the contributions of Dr. Paul Myers and Dr. Ronald Willis, geology professors at UWEC who worked very hard to establish a strong field component in our young geology program.

The Geology Dept. hopes to offer Myers/Willis scholarships to more students each year as the scholarship fund balance rises. We encourage all alumni who have benefited from our field experiences over the years to contribute to this fund. In addition, this is a great way to honor Paul and Ron for their dedication to our field program! See page 10 for information about contributing to this important new scholarship fund.
time to share teaching ideas.

LORI SNYDER, Senior Lecturer
snyderld@uwec.edu

Hello once again! This year has certainly passed quickly and it is time for news from the Department of Geology. Each summer brings new adventures in the Rocky Mountains and summer 2007 was no different. Great weather, geology and wildlife viewing made for a memorable Geology 303. I did not participate in geologic field work last summer but did manage to keep busy with remodeling projects, bicycle riding and a short trip to the Yucatan for some fun and relaxation. It was a much-needed time for rejuvenation! Then began the regular academic year with its familiar flavor. Geology 110 and Geology 201 keep me busy teaching. The most recent project in British Columbia (in collaboration with Brian Mahoney, Bob Hooper and others) finished up with the publication of four 1:50,000-scale maps. Travel was frequent this winter and spring (especially enjoyable as Wisconsin definitely had “winter” this year!) with trips to Baja Mexico, field camp in New Mexico, and spring break in Argentina. It’s always good to experience new places and excellent rocks with other fun-loving geology types! Hope life is treating you all well. Keep in touch!

LORILIE STEINKE,
Academic Department Associate
steinklm@uwec.edu

It seems like only yesterday that I started working in the Geology Department, yet I find myself working on my third newsletter. The department continues to be very active and busy, as is my life away from the office. My daughters are both in middle school now and very active in band and school activities. It is amazing how fast they grow up! Of course the same could be said about our graduates. Please remember to stay in touch and let us know how things are going in your lives. We also have begun a job-notice e-mail distribution list for recent graduates, so if you wish to be added to that list, please contact me. We all enjoy hearing from our students after graduation, so please keep sending your news updates!

KENT SYVERSON, Professor
syverskm@uwec.edu

Greetings to all alumni! I am now in my 16th year at UW-Eau Claire, and I still enjoy my interactions with students. I continue to conduct research at the Blue Hills Felsenmeer State Natural Area and in Maine. Last spring the Blue Hills Felsenmeer research crew (Steve Hoaglund, Emmi Teige, and Jeremy Hinke) presented at NC GSA in Lawrence, KS, and Steve won a best poster award! Andy Thompson and I mapped the Bangor Quadrangle in southern Maine during summer 2007. “Urban mapping” on the Bangor Quad was challenging (narrow, busy streets; poor access to critical areas), but straie and crag-and-tail features revealed excellent evidence for a Late Wisconsinan calving embayment in the Penobscot River valley. While in Maine my family and I visited Castine, West Quoddy Head Lighthouse (the easternmost point in the USA), and of course our favorite swimming hole on the Sandy River north of Farmington. On our way home we visited Civil War General Joshua Chamberlain’s house (of Little Roundtop fame), Cape Cod, New Bedford Whaling National Historic Park, Gettysburg, the Air Force National Museum in Dayton, and Abraham Lincoln’s hometown, Springfield, IL. It was a nice (but hot) trip.

During fall 2007 I enjoyed sabbatical #2. I spent three weeks in Sweden and Norway during August/September. Highlights included a visit with a friend who I met in Scotland, a reunion with Dr. Mark Johnson (a former Gustavus Adolphus College professor who now teaches in Sweden) and seeing his interesting field area, a fine field trip to the southern mountains of Sweden, the Vasa warship (1628) museum in Stockholm, and beautiful Norway (Bergen, Sognefjorden, Jutenheimen, and Sotra Islands). I was impressed by the lateral meltwater channels in Sweden. For that reason, I decided to write a journal manuscript (now in press in Boreas) about lateral meltwater channels based on my work in Alaska. One highlight of the year was the publication of the Chippewa County Pleistocene geology report (WGHS Bulletin 103). This research project began in 1996 and involved many UWEC geology students (see separate news item about the publication and an upcoming glacial geology field trip), so it was nice to finally see the report and 1:100,000-scale map published. If you were one of my Geol 395 research students in Chippewa County, stop by my office sometime to get your own personal copy of the bulletin!! It would be fun to have you attend the field trip on 9/27 as well.

This spring has been rather unusual. First, I am not teaching oceanography. My sabbatical replacement, Dr. Paul Hartmann, is an oceanographer, so he is teaching oceanography this spring. Thus, I am teaching four labs of Environmental Geology. In addition, approximately 1 ft of snow is still on the ground outside as of early March. We received snow in early December, and the skiing has been marvelous. This is the first time in at least five years that we have had good snow before February. Thanks to all alumni who send news items and take the time to visit us in Phillips Hall. It is always fun to see you! Keep up the good work!


EMERITUS FACULTY NEWS

Paul E. Myers, Professor Emeritus
myerspe@starband.net

Well, another year has passed, making it a teeny bit easier to think in geologic time. As the “Original Precambrian Geologist” of the UWEC Geology Department, I have a special vision of things past and can tell you wonderful stories about what it was like way back there in the 60’s and 70’s, when the Geology Department was hatched. These stories have grown much more interesting with the passage of several eons of repetition. Let me know if you’re interested in hearing a few. Outliving your competition has the advantage of giving you a monopoly on the “truth,” so I now feel free to tell it as “it really happened.” It’s wonderful to see all that is happening in the Geology Dept. these days!

Living here in the Green Mountain Wilderness gives one a different perspective on what is “important.” I’m painting, doing “woodwork” of all kinds, raising political hell in local media and meetings, and trying to stay out of jail. I also design and build energy-efficient buildings, consult on the subject with local architects and builders, and try to push people into thinking smaller and making a smaller footprint on our fragile planet.

Let me know what you’ve been doing, or better, come out here and see us. Skiing resorts are all around, and there’s lots of room to hang out while looking at some really cool mylonitic rocks. What are you waiting for?

Welthy and I went to Russia, Portugal, Spain, and India lately, and plan a trip to Ecuador and the Galapagos in April. Join us!

John Tinker, Professor Emeritus
tinkerjr@truewest.net

I send a warm hello to all current and former students and faculty members of the Geology Department. I miss teaching, but retirement also has its benefits.

I did some fishing in Texas during March 2007, and I am packing now for a month of Texas fishing during March 2008. I am thankful that other fishermen add to my supper plate, otherwise I would be very hungry. No luck with deer hunting in Wisconsin where there are 1.5 million deer, but I was successful...
Kristen Cahow-Scholtes (1997). Kristin is back in Eau Claire working as the Eau Claire County Land Conservation Supervisor. She In addition to his career he writes, "I’ve been busy with school and working on additional certifications. The same old advice that my grandpa told me as a child still holds true today in the financial world…buy low, sell high, and spend less than you make. Those are three ‘gems’ to take to the bank.”

Jeff Paddock (1997). Jeff is a project geologist for V3 Companies, a large engineering consulting firm in Chicago.

Steven Peterson (1997). Steve is working with the USGS in Lincoln, Nebraska. He writes, "I love my job, and am having great fun leading a team working on regional and sub-regional ground-water flow models." He still enjoys hunting, fishing, boating and gardening.

Ryan Sauter (2003). Ryan and his wife welcomed a son, Logan Ryan, into their family in February. Ryan is a hydrogeologist at Shaw Engineering in Onalaska, WI. His company has been very busy and has been experiencing a large increase in workload. They are actively looking to fill entry-level positions. He adds, "My boss seems to really like Eau Claire grads, and I told him I would do my best to round up a few more."

Stephen Sellwood (1999). Stephen and his wife, Alyssa, welcomed their second son, Simon, in September 2007. They also have a son, Peter, who is three years old. He continues to work as a hydrogeologist for BT^2, Inc., a Madison-based engineering consulting firm.

Erik Tomlinson (1999). Erik was married on September 23, 2007, to Elizabeth Collins in Stillwater, MN. He is a hydrogeologist for Short Elliot Hendrickson, a professional consulting service firm based in Minneapolis. He specializes in hydrogeologic investigations and modeling, environmental site assessments, as well as construction and project oversight.

Chad Underwood (1996). Chad is a geotechnical engineer in St. Paul, MN. His family moved to Hudson, WI, in 2007. Their twins turned one year old in December and are starting to walk (March).

Jim Watkins (2005). Jim is a graduate student at UC-Berkeley and reports that things are going very well. He writes, "Last year I made it through the qualifying exam, which was fun and rewarding (but only in retrospect). I’ve had a lot of fun TA-ing for classes and taking in California geology on field trips and hikes." In addition to school, he is learning how to make homebrew and is playing a lot of banjo.

Kristin Weaver Bowman (1996). Kristin has been a lecturer at Cal State Fullerton since 2003. Kristin writes, "We have a new family member as of May 21, 2007. Our four-year-old, Xander, welcomed his little brother, Zachary Edward, with open arms and kisses (though he didn’t like that belly-button-thing). Both Xander and our dog, Ubebebe, love the baby, and are only a little bit jealous of him (albeit in a good-natured way). Zach enjoys eating rocks just like his brother did at this age, so I think we have him on the right path. Dave, my husband, is running around like a seismologist with his computer turned off as he does his Department Chair duties. I continue to do in-service teacher workshops on earth science concepts, and have made some good contacts throughout the LA basin as a result. As usual, if any of you old UWEC pals or pros are ever in the area (LA/Orange County), please let me know. It would be very nice to see you and catch up."

Edward Weiland (1994). Eddie writes, "Sandy, our 4 boys and I are still in Alaska and are looking forward to the 24 hours of summer daylight to make up for the long winter nights. Our recent geologic activities have been limited to glacier hiking and gold panning in the mountains. Currently I’m working in the Western Alaska Area from Cordova to Attu to Nome, primarily in an administrative role with the U.S. Coast Guard; however, I do perform ocean erosion analyses for some villages built on longshore nomadic land masses (spits). We love AK and recommend it to anyone who has the opportunity to visit/reside."

"We love AK and recommend it to anyone who has the opportunity to visit/reside"
Edward Wieland (1994)

"look forward to hiking in Shenandoah, visiting my farmers’ market, and planting my own garden!"
Stephanie Larsen (2001)

"It’s a full house and it’s always full of fun."
Tony Jones (1992)

Ronald P. Willis, Professor Emeritus willisrtid@msn.com

The past year was pretty empty due to my advanced age and physical as well as mental inabilities that have almost overwhelmed me. My extremely sweet wife Thora is doing a great job in taking care of me, and we are truly enjoying our lives out here in Idaho, with our drives up into the mountains of the region (Idaho, Wyoming, Montana, Utah, Arizona, Washington, Oregon, and British Columbia) --- truly fantastic!! We’re prepping at the present time for our drive south to Tucson about the end of March, and have a plan for a later drive to Northern Idaho to repeat a drive along the Lolo Pass road, then up to Sandpoint and down through Coeur d’Alene. So far our very favorite has been the Sawtooths near the small town of Stanley, but we love it all --- even a one-day drive over into Jackson Hole..... PERFECT!!!

Thanks for thinking of us now and then -- it’s a great reminder of the wonderful memories we have of all our years there in Wisconsin, with the drives up to Minocqua and all the shorelines of Lake Superior. Late last summer we took a beautiful drive out through West Virginia, then up into New England, followed by taking it easy along the roads of Quebec before hitting Thunder Bay and Eau Claire. Thanks for reminding us of all that past years mean to us during this more ancient time in our lives. Especially THANK YOU to all the students that made it all possible. We appreciate each one of them. Best regards and gratitude always, Ron and Thora Willis
Chippewa County glacial geology report published

Project involved many undergraduate research projects

(modified from University News Bureau press release)

More than 10 years of research conducted by Kent Syverson and 14 UWEC geology students came to fruition in late December with the publication of Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey Bulletin 103, "Pleistocene Geology of Chippewa County, Wisconsin."

The 53-page illustrated bulletin on the glacial geology of Chippewa County, which includes a colored 1:100,000-scale geologic map and cross sections, describes the sediments, landforms and glacial history of the county. It makes this information accessible to everyone from land-use professionals and land owners to area teachers or outdoor enthusiasts interested in knowing more about local geology. The 1,000-mile-long Ice Age National Scenic Trail, which passes through Chippewa County, and the Chippewa Moraine Ice Age Reserve Visitor Center stimulate much interest in this area’s geological features and history.

Chippewa County Conservatisn Dan Masterpole said the bulletin is a great example of an effective effort by the university to combine research with a project that has great practical value.

"This publication will be very important to economic development and ongoing land management efforts in the county," said Masterpole. "Local governments, engineering firms, private developers, building contractors and well drillers all need good information about site conditions when decisions are being made about where to develop and where to conserve land. The same groups also need to locate reliable sources of sand, gravel and clay to build and maintain roads, manufacture cement and blacktop and improve building sites. The more we know about our natural resources, the more we appreciate them and the better we can manage them," Masterpole said.

Syverson will officially "roll out" the publication during a glacial geology field trip for laypersons on Sept. 27, 2008. The one-day course will be offered through UW-Eau Claire’s Office of Continuing Education. The trip will concentrate on looking at glacial sediments and landforms found in this area. Hiking will not be required, and all participants will be able to purchase a copy of the bulletin and map.

Syverson is particularly pleased that many undergraduate students were involved in the project, made possible through $63,000 in grant funding from WGNHS and the Chippewa County Land Conservation Department. The project progressed from field work, conducted during the summers of 1996-2000, into laboratory work. Although many students were involved, Syverson said one student researcher, Katie Thornburg-Stariha, contributed to the project in a major way after he recruited her as a freshman researcher.

"Katie did both field mapping and clay mineralogy lab studies for the next two years," said Syverson. "She used our x-ray diffractometer to identify different clays in glacial till and went on to publish four poster abstracts on the project. One poster earned an award at the national GSA in Reno, NV. She also obtained full-ride funding to attend graduate school at UW-Madison, where she received her master’s degree in geology."

"This collaboration allowed me to see what it was like to work as a geologist prior to entering the field and what job opportunities existed with the education I was acquiring," said Stariha. "The undergraduate research program in the UW-Eau Claire geology department is top notch and allows for development of rapport with the professors that you don’t get at other institutions. Working on this project gave me opportunities and experiences beyond those of just taking classes and provided me an excellent background for work I am doing now."

Originally from Spooner, Stariha is now coordinator of the St. Croix Environmental General Assistance Program for the St. Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin, where she develops and implements environmental grant programs related to surface and groundwater, indoor air quality, geographic information systems, brownfields, wetland mitigation, drinking and wastewater, solid waste and recycling, and other environmental and natural resource issues identified by the Tribal Council.

"Our geology program at UW-Eau Claire is very hands-on, and that makes our students very marketable for jobs right out of college or getting paid to attend graduate school for further study," Syverson said. Syverson also encourages his research students who completed Geology 395 projects in Chippewa County to stop by his office and get their free Chippewa County Bulletin!

To order Bulletin 103 from the WGNHS map sales office in Madison, call 608-263-7389 or order online. The cost is $15 plus shipping and handling.

For fee information or to register for the Sept. 27th field trip, call Continuing Education at 715-836-3563 or go to their website (http://www.uwec.edu/ce/enrichment/life/glacial/index.htm) to register online.

Julia Potter wins Golder/Cargill Geology Student Scholarship

Julia Potter, a senior from St. Cloud, WI, has been awarded the $2000 Golder/Cargill Geology Student Scholarship for the coming year. Julia graduated from Campbellsport High School in Campbellsport, WI, and has established a fine academic record at UW-Eau Claire. Julia will conduct geology research with Dr. Brian Mahoney in Montana and British Columbia this summer. Congratulations, Julia!

This scholarship, established fall 2005 by Greg (UW-Eau Claire geology alumnus, 1984) and Julia Beckstrom (UW-Eau Claire alumna, 1985), is for comprehensive geology majors who have completed Mineralogy-Petrology I, developed an excellent academic record, and demonstrated a financial need.
Student Research Day – Spring 2008

Cale Anger and Anna Baker with Katherine Grote, "Experimental Estimation of the Penetration Depth of the GPR Groundwave," American Geophysical Union meeting in San Francisco, CA, December 8-12, 2007. Winner of an "Outstanding Student Poster" award at AGU.

Anna Baker, Crystal Nickel, Bryan Hardel, and Brian Jordan with Katherine Grote, "Vadose Zone Characterization Using Ground Penetrating Radar Groundwaves."

Elizabeth Balgord with J. Brian Mahoney and Robert Hooper, "Modeling Middle Devonian Nickel Deposition in the Selwyn Basin, Northern Yukon."

"Redefinition of the Precambrian/Cambrian Contact in Southwestern Montana." Winner of 2nd place poster award at the Life and Earth Sciences division at Student Research Day (see photo with Chancellor Levin-Stankevich).

Jacob Boer with Phillip Ihinger, "Geochemistry of the New England Lamprophyre Series: Cross-Comparison of Analytical Methods."

Giselle Conde and Jenny Sisko with Phillip Ihinger, "Obsidian Hydration Dating of Archeological Artifacts from the Middle East: Characterizing Compositional Variations of Potential Volcanic Sources."


David Fairbairn with Bianca Pedersen, "Using Trace Metal Analysis to Determine Pollution Sources Impacting Lake Altoona, West-Central, WI," North-Central Geological Society of America meeting in Evansville, IN, April 23-25, 2008.

Michelle Forrette with J. Brian Mahoney, "Examining Cretaceous Strata of the Taylor Creek Group in British Columbia: Potential Connection of the Methow and Tyaughton Basins."

Lynn Galston with Karen Havholm, "Re-evaluation of the Proterozoic Devils Island Sandstone, Keweenawan Rift, Northern Wisconsin," North-Central Geological Society of America meeting in Evansville, IN, April 23-25, 2008.

Lynn Galston with Karen Havholm, "Reinterpretation of the Trace Fossil-Bearing Devils Island Sandstone, Keweenawan Rift, Northern Wisconsin," Institute of Lake Superior Geology meeting in Marquette, MI, May 6-10, 2008.

Anne Gauer with Geoffrey Pignotta, "Geochemical Correlation of Coeval Volcanic and Plutonic Rocks from the Incrementally Emplaced Jackass Lakes Pluton, Sierra Nevada Batholith, CA."

Alex Guy with Phillip Ihinger and J. Brian Mahoney, "Geochemistry of the Elkhorn Mountains Volcanics: Insights into Late Cretaceous Magmatic Evolution of Southwestern Montana."

Brennan Kadulski, Anna Baker, Anne Gauer, Bridget Kelly, Crystal Nickel, Elizabeth Teutschmann, and Elizabeth Balgord with J. Brian Mahoney, Lori Snyder, and Robert Hooper, "Geologic Evolution of the Argentinean Andes."


Adam Krieger and Brooke Fahrenkrog with J. Brian Mahoney and Robert Hooper, "Trace metal distribution within the fluvial levee samples in the Coeur d'Alene River, Idaho."


Shane Peterson, Michelle Forgette, Bryan Hardel, Julia Potter, Phil Larson, Taylor Crist, and Heidi Stanek with J. Brian Mahoney, "Synorogenic Basin Evolution in the Cordillera Frontal, Argentina."

Julia Potter with J. Brian Mahoney, Jill Fergusson, and Lori D. Snyder, "Detailed Geochemical Analysis of the Valde Group Forearc Basin, Baja California, Mexico."


Heidi Stanek with Geoffrey Pignotta, "Geochemical Characterization of Magma Source(s) and Compositional Variation within the Incrementally Emplaced Jackass Lakes Pluton, Sierra Nevada Batholith, California."

Emilia Teige with Bianca Pedersen, "Mapping of Spring Discharge into Lake Altoona."

Andrew Thompson with Kent Syverson, "Evidence for a Calving Embayment in the Penobscot River Valley, Bangor, ME," North-Central Geological Society of America meeting in Evansville, IN, April 24-25, 2008. Winner of 3rd place poster award in the Life and Earth Sciences division at Student Research Day (see photo in front of poster).
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