Letter from the Chair 2009

Greeting from the Interim (thankfully) Chair. I was pressed into service to cover for Bob Hooper while he took a much-needed full-year sabbatical. The role of chair is interesting – part privilege, part nightmare. Bob chose a wonderful year to take a break… The University was seeking to implement its Strategic Plan, undergoing a university-wide review of all programs and services (PEEQ — Program to Evaluate and Enhance Quality), and the state has been struggling with the biggest budgetary crisis in decades. Every meeting was truly a joy session! However, the Department managed to survive the year under my direction, although Lorilie threatened to quit about twice a week.

The Department did pretty well in the PEEQ review, and we actually managed to brag a bit about our accomplishments. Thanks to all alumni who responded to the online survey and supplied the data used to justify our existence during the PEEQ process. In addition, thanks to all alumni/friends who donated money to the department during these difficult economic times. We have a vibrant department with energetic teachers and scholars, and the sense of community developed between students and faculty make this a wonderful place to work. My thanks to all of you for putting up with me!

One final note: My time as interim chair clearly underscores the outstanding job Bob Hooper has done as chair for many years. He is a tireless advocate for our department, and everyone in our department owes him heartfelt gratitude. Thanks for all your efforts, Bob — your work is truly appreciated. But you can have your job back!

Sincerely,

New Feature: ‘09-’10 Geology Field Excursion Calendar!

Support the UWEC Chapter of SGE: The Earth Science Honor Society
Sigma Gamma Epsilon, the Earth Science Honor Society, is producing the official UW-Eau Claire Geology field excursion calendar, complete with images from both familiar destinations (e.g., Boulder, Montana) and new localities (e.g., Belize). For just $12.50 you can own a copy of this beautiful academic year calendar. The calendar is professionally produced and runs from August 2009 through July 2010. Feel free to preview the monthly images by clicking the calendar link on the UWEC Geology Department home webpage (http://www.uwec.edu/geology/index.htm).

Send check or money order for $12.50 per calendar payable to Sigma Gamma Epsilon to ensure your own copy (we will accept checks sent to the Geology Dept. through September). Free shipping. Free handling. Just $12.50.

Please send questions to John A. Peterson, petersjt@uwec.edu

Spring geology banquet tradition established

For many years, the Geology Department did not have a spring banquet. Faculty and students thought this would be a fun addition to the academic calendar, and approximately five years ago the GeoClub started sponsoring a spring banquet.

The spring banquet has grown each year, and now it seems firmly established within Geology Department traditions. Many students invite parents and siblings to the banquet so they can meet the classmates described in numerous field trip tales…! Awards such as the Golder/Cargill Scholarship, Myers/Willis Field Camp Scholarships, Excellence in Geology, and Excellence in Service awards are announced as well. Add a fine meal, a chance to say goodbye to classmates after another year, and a slide show with the best photographs from geology field trips/field work, and one has an appropriate way to bring the academic year to a close!
The 2009 Geologic Field Excursions trip involved a transect across the northern Central American arc system. Lori Snyder, J. Brian Mahoney, ten students, and two geology alumni and their partners spent eight days traveling from the main volcanic edifice in Guatemala to the back arc carbonate platforms of Belize. The trip commenced with an examination of Lake Aitilan, a spectacular volcanic caldera complex near Panajachel. We took an early morning boat trip across the lake and climbed an extremely steep slope up Santa Rosa, one of the resurgent satellite cones on the caldera margins. We quickly realized the Guatemalans have not yet discovered switchbacks. Next we ventured south to Antigua, Guatemala, where we were privileged to see the traditional Easter celebration — an amazing experience with hundreds of intricate floral displays in the streets and a procession with traditional costumes that stretched for blocks. Next morning we awoke to the constant eruptions of Vulcan Fuego and spent the day examining active basaltic lava flows pouring from satellite cones on the flanks of Vulcan Pacaya. Standing five meters from an active lava flow is truly awe-inspiring.

Next we ventured into the back arc region and examined the Motagua fault zone, which is the major strike-slip fault marking the plate boundary between North America and the Chortis block of Central America. The back arc region is a deeply dissected carbonate platform with thick jungle vegetation that harbored the Maya civilization. We spent a day touring the ancient Mayan ruins of Tikal, which was a major city during the height of Mayan culture. We also ventured into Belize and explored the Actun Tunichil Muknal (ATM) cave, a virtually pristine Mayan sacrificial site hidden deep within a spectacular cave system. The site is preserved in its original state, which required a half mile hike through a subterranean river and hiking in stocking feet with headlamps to see the ceremonial artifacts. This was an absolutely stunning and deeply moving experience.

The back arc also contains the spectacular Belize barrier reef system, which we examined up close and personal for several days at the end of the trip. Tobacco Caye is a wonderful little island set right on the edge of the reef system, and it provided a magnificent base for several snorkel trips examining reef morphology and biology.

The arc to back arc transect was a highly educational (and fun!) trip. It is safe to say that a good time was had by all!
Rocky Mountain Field Studies Summer ’08
by Bob Hooper

This course offers surprises every year – it always has been an adventure. The 2008 offering was no exception to this rule. Lori Snyder and Bob Hooper again offered this special course for 15 students, some of whom had little prior camping experience. They grew enormously in their survival skills as the trip proceeded.

We eased into the camping with a four-day, sustained heavy rain in the Black Hills – inches of rain every day – until eventually the rivers were flooding. Thus, we decided to head to higher elevation where the rain would at least change to snow. And snow it did! The reserved campsites for the rest of the trip were unapproachable due to residual snow pack and new snow blocking campground roads, so we camped wherever we could. This meant staying in the general campgrounds in the Tetons where they had not even turned on the water when we arrived. The good news — crowds were very thin (nonexistent). What other fool would volunteer to camp in a closed campground, in the snow, without any water?! They did open the showers for us at Colter Bay and surprisingly we never had to wait in any lines. Lori was the first person to use the newly remodeled showers for the season, and she immediately figured out how to overcome the temperature limiting function on the new showers in order to get her shower really hot! Lori will share her secret if you ask.

The average temperature for the trip was in the 30’s. Snow fell many nights and intermittent rain fell during the day. By taking advantage of small “weather windows,” we were able to complete most of the field projects and scope out a few future projects for the course. We could not access any of the field sites near Togwotee Pass east of the Tetons due to the snow, and our hike to Surprise Lake in the high Tetons was cut short by a snow “shower” that lasted all afternoon.

We watched ice-out on Yellowstone Lake where students observed that ice flows moving on the turbulent river exhibited both constructive and destructive plate boundary interactions complete with active “thrust faults.” The hike on Mt. Washburn in Yellowstone was truly spectacular with snow pack up to twenty feet thick, but the good news is the south-facing cliffs gave us access to excellent volcanic rock exposures that would require a step-ladder to access during normal years. Our Geol 303 group was the first group to make the summit of Washburn during 2009 season without the use of skis or snowshoes (not that these wouldn’t have aided the approach). We made the hike on June 3 and the last record in the log-book was from April which tells you something about the conditions we experienced. However, the view from the top on this rare clear day during the trip was truly spectacular – and very white. It takes a year like this to remember why we spend so much money on field gear. Thank goodness for the Gortex parkas, warm sleeping bags, and four-season tents. We will teach this course again this year – it keeps us young.

Chippewa County glacial geology field trip a success and will be offered again

Field trip participant – “This field trip was extremely educational and fun. The instructor was amazing.” — Kent’s mom

In September 2008, Kent Syverson led a group of 45 laypersons (including Kent’s mom) on a glacial geology field trip to Chippewa County. This trip celebrated the publication of Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey Bulletin 103, “Pleistocene Geology of Chippewa County, Wisconsin.”

The weather and fall colors cooperated, and a fun time was had by all (see participant testimonial). The one-day course offered through UW-Eau Claire’s Office of Continuing Education focused on glacial sediments and landforms found in Chippewa County. Stops included the Town of Wheaton, ice-walled-lake plains, Chippewa Moraine Ice Age National Scientific Reserve, and Otter Lake County Park.

The coach bus tour was full, and there was even a waiting list for the course! Thus, the course will be run one more time on Saturday Sept. 26, 2009. Don’t take Kent’s mom’s word for it – attend this trip and relive your glory years in geology!

For fee information or to register for the Sept. 26th field trip, call Continuing Education at 715-836-3636 or go to their Web site (http://www.uwec.edu/ce/enrichment/life/glacial/index.htm) to register online.

National GSA in Minneapolis October 2011

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. See the next newsletter for more details.
A Tale of Two Classmates (Terri Hogue and Kristie Franz):

Two Geology Undergrads, Two Friends, Two Ph.D.s, Two Research - 1 Faculty Positions, and Two Current Collaborators

by Kent Syverson

Terri Hogue (Holmen, WI, UWEC Geology alumna, 1995) came to UWEC as a non-traditional student after marriage and having a child. Terri started as an accounting major, but quickly discovered geology.

Kristie Franz (Chippewa Falls, WI, UWEC Geology alumna, 1995) came to UWEC as a young psychology major directly out of high school. An oceanography class with Dr. Ronald Willis convinced her she wanted to be a geology major.

Terri and Kristie met in geology classes at UWEC. They also worked part-time at the Wisconsin DNR in Eau Claire in the Leaking Underground Storage Tank Program. There they became good friends. They attended field trips such as Rocky Mountain Field Studies together. They also conducted collaborative research with geology faculty (Terri with John Tinker, Kristie with Kent Syverson).

After graduation, the two friends went their separate ways. Terri went to graduate school at University of Arizona. Kristie worked for an environmental consulting firm in Florida and California. Kristie decided she was looking for a change in careers, and friend Terri encouraged her to check out the hydrology program at the University of Arizona.

Kristie liked what she saw at Arizona, and she was accepted into the same hydrology research program as Terri supervised by Professor Soroosh Sorooshian. Terri and Kristie worked together on surficial hydrologic processes as associated with snowmelt, runoff, flooding, etc. Terri received her M.S. and Ph.D. from Arizona (2003), and Kristie received her M.S. from Arizona and a Ph.D. from UC-Irvine (2006).

Terri accepted an assistant professorship in the Civil & Environmental Engineering Department at UCLA. Kristie accepted an assistant professorship in the Department of Geological & Atmospheric Sciences at Iowa State University. Both are teaching hydrology, conducting research with graduate students at Research-1 institutions, and receiving funding from federal agencies such as NASA, NOAA, and NSF. Terri was just tenured and promoted to Associate Professor (on the same day she heard she had received a prestigious NSF Early CAREER Award). Kristie is still on the pressure-filled tenure track.

Terri and Kristie continue to collaborate as friends and colleagues on research grants, projects, and publications (see publication banner). If you want to see more about Terri or Kristie’s work, check out their websites (www.cce.ucla.edu/faculty/hogue.htm and www.public.iastate.edu/~kfranz). Not bad for a couple of small-town Wisconsin girls!

Terri and Kristie judged posters at UWEC Student Research Day on April 27, 2009. Here is Terri (back) with the Geology crew after judging was over. Clockwise from Terri: Kent Syverson, John Tinker (Terri’s undergraduate research mentor), Robert Hooper, Christine Tinker, Katherine Grote, and Karen Havholm.

Terri and Kristie are examples of the last friendships forged in the UWEC Geology program. They also show the value of a UWEC Geology degree – our students are all over the world doing high-quality, important work. We are proud of Terri, Kristie, and all the other alumni proudly flying the banner of UWEC Geology!


Forrette and Kadulski win Annual Award for Service

The “Annual Award for Service” recognizes a geology major for the exceptional service he/she has done for the department. We are announcing the winners of the 2008 and 2009 awards in this newsletter – Michelle Forrette and Brendan Kadulski.

Michelle Forrette is the award winner for 2008. Michelle was a comprehensive general geology major from Burnsville, MN. Michelle was always willing to help out around the department and on field trips. Her wonderful laugh enhanced morale around the department as well! Michelle served as an officer in the Geology Club and helped around the department with whatever was needed. Michelle graduated in fall 2008 and immediately became a mining geologist for Barrick Gold Corporation in Winnemucca, Nevada. (In fact, she was hired before she graduated!)

Brennan Kadulski is the award winner for 2009. Brennan has been a lead person in taking care of the departmental field vehicles – a huge job in a department with many field trips. In addition, Brennan has helped coordinate food for the Earth Science Seminar Series. Brennan will take Field Camp II this summer and continue with geology classes in the fall as he completes his degree at UWEC.

Service is sometimes overlooked, but we in the Geology Department recognize the important contributions Michelle and Brennan have made to our program. THANKS! Congratulations to Michelle and Brennan, and best wishes for continued success in the future!

FORMER SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS

2003-2004: Sarah Prindiville
2004-2005: Christina Piper
2005-2006: Amanda LaGesse
2006-2007: Amanda LaGesse
our work has slowed a bit along with the rest of the economy. With lower prices and maybe some stability, other sectors such as manufacturing and construction may come back. It would be difficult to do this sort of work and not be an optimist. On the personal front, a few of my fellow Blugolds (what’s a Blugold?) have been keeping up with the Beckstrom family’s trek across North America seeing baseball games in many of the major league ballparks. This year we plan to see games in Houston, Arlington (Dallas), Toronto, Pittsburgh and Cleveland. After these five parks are done, the last two will be St. Louis and Kansas City (which we may try to squeeze in sometime this summer). Once St. Louis & K.C. are done, we’ll have seen baseball games in every major league baseball park. Up next, hockey! Or if you ask my kids, I think they will want to go to Disney World.”

William Bergh (1997). Billy is the owner of Geo Tech Soil and Site Evaluation, LLC. The company offers soil testing, septic design and long-term inspection and service agreements. A relatively new area of concern is the ongoing servicing and maintenance of ATU’s (aerobic treatment units). These are miniature sewage treatment plants that pre-treat wastewater prior to its disposal back into the ground. His company is currently the largest provider of ATU agreements in west-central Wisconsin. Billy was recognized in the October 2006 issues of the Onsite Installer for designing the largest privately owned wastewater treatment system in Wisconsin.

Nicole (Bergstrom) Kane (2002). Nicole writes “Chris and I welcomed our first child, Brady James, into the world in March 2008. After my maternity leave, my company let me work from home part time. It works out great - I’m able to be home with Brady while still making a little bit of money and keeping my foot in the door!”

Jesse Bernhardt (2004). Jesse writes, “I received a master’s degree in geography from UW-Milwaukee after completing a GIS internship with the city of Dubuque, IA. The internship led to a continuing position with the engineering department where I spend the majority of my time making updates to the city’s sanitary and storm sewer GIS. It is enjoyable work, and I’m grateful to have employment in these tough economic times.”

Jacob Boer (2008). Jacob writes “I have signed a one year contract with E.P.I.K. (English Program in Korea). I decided to settle in Gwangju. From what I have gathered...”

The "Excellence in Geology" Award recognizes the academic achievements of the outstanding graduating geology major, both in coursework and in faculty/student collaborative research. In the past, award winners have been announced the year after they graduate. This year we are announcing two sets of winners so the news is more up-to-date! The winners of the Geology Excellence Award for 2007-2008 were Cale Anger and David Kawatski, and the winners for 2008-2009 were Anna Baker and Liz Balgord.

CALE ANGER (2007-08)
(written by Katherine Grote)

Cale Anger of Spring Valley, WI, earned the excellence in geology award based on his research projects examining the geostatistical relationships between soil moisture/textures and determining the penetration depth of the ground penetrating radar (GPR) groundwave. Cale began his research career at UWEC as a sophomore, where he investigated how geostatistical techniques could be used in conjunction with soil moisture measurement to predict soil texture. Cale presented this research at the North-Central GSA meeting in 2006, where he won an outstanding student poster award. Later, Cale was very instrumental in constructing the laboratory for our GPR groundwave project, and he continued with this project until his graduation. In 2007, Cale presented some results from this research at the Fall AGU meeting (see photo), and received another outstanding student poster award. The AGU award is especially impressive, as Cale was competing primarily with graduate students for this distinction. Cale has now moved on to the graduate program at the University of Minnesota, where he is studying contaminant transport through karst.

ANNA BAKER (2008-09)
(written by Katherine Grote)

Anna Baker of Eau Claire, WI, earned the excellence in geology award based on her research projects creating petrophysical relationships to estimate nitrate concentrations in the vadose zone and determining the penetration depth of the ground penetrating radar (GPR) groundwave. Anna began her research career at UWEC investigating the relationships between nitrate and electrical conductivity as a function of soil moisture and soil water content. Anna presented this research at the fall AGU meeting in 2006. In spring 2006 Anna joined the research team in exploring applications of GPR to soil moisture and texture estimation for agricultural applications. Anna, together with Cale Anger, presented some results from this research at the Fall AGU meeting in 2007 and received an outstanding student poster award (see photo). The AGU award is especially impressive, as Anna was competing primarily with graduate students for this distinction. Anna has continued working on the GPR project throughout her tenure at UWEC and also worked on an additional research project in 2009 using geochemistry to determine the input sources for Lake Altona. After graduation, Anna is working for the USGS this summer in New Jersey as part of the National Association of Geology Teachers (NAGT-USGS) Summer Cooperative Field Program, a significant honor recognizing excellent performance at field camp.

Liz Balgord (2008-09)
(written by J. Brian Mahoney)

Liz Balgord of Madison, WI, earned the excellence in geology award based on her research excellence in both field and laboratory projects in Montana, British Columbia and Yukon. In Montana, Liz assisted with regional mapping and took the lead on our ongoing detrital zircon provenance studies of the Precambrian/Cambrian boundary. Liz assisted with a regional stratigraphic analysis of Cretaceous strata along the southern end of the Chilcotin Plateau in south-central British Columbia. There she worked as a field assistant with recent UWEC graduate Kate Maclaurin, who is working on a M.Sc. at Simon Fraser University. In Yukon, Liz worked with J. Brian Mahoney and Bob Hooper on a stratigraphic, geochemical and electron microscopic analysis of a very unusual stratabound nickel deposit in the Richardson Mountains. The results of this project will be published in Economic Geology in fall 2009. After one final field season in Montana and British Columbia, Liz will be moving to Pocatello, Idaho, to work on a tectons and sedimentation project in Neoproterozoic rocks in Utah and Idaho for her M.Sc. at Idaho State University.

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
2006-2007: Adam Kjos and Catherine (Kate) MacLaurin
NEWS FROM FACULTY AND STAFF

JILL FERGUSON, Analytical Scientist and Laboratory Manager
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It’s hard to believe I’m already in my third year here at UWEC, but the time goes quickly when you enjoy what you do! I assist faculty and students with their research as it relates to elemental analysis and microscopy. I take care of our high resolution inductively coupled plasma – mass spectrometer (HR-ICP-MS), which is one of 400 such instruments in the world. To give students the opportunity to work with this caliber of instrumentation is really rewarding, and it gives this outstanding department another feather in its cap. I’m so pleased that I’ve been able to work with so many students from not only Geology, but Chemistry, Physics, Geography, and Environmental Public Health as well. Starting in the fall, we will be able to add the discipline of Materials Science to that list. The UW System Board of Regents recently approved a new interdisciplinary Materials Science major at UWEC. http://www.uwec.edu/newsreleases/08/dec/1205newmajorapproved_MM.htm

I also work on a number of outreach projects involving both other academic institutions and private sector clients. I am always interested in new collaborations, so please send me an e-mail if I can be of service to you or your organization!

KATHERINE GROTE, Assistant Professor
grotekr@uwec.edu

It’s good to be back in the department (trenches?) again after a year of research and maternity leave. I started the year with an intensive new course, Engineering Geology and Geophysics. Creating this course from scratch was a huge time commitment, but completely worth it! For the geophysics portion of the course, twelve students and I helped with site characterization at WRR, a chemical recycling and reclamtion company in Eau Claire. The groundwater near the site is contaminated with suspected DNAPLs, so our geophysical techniques were used to estimate the depth to bedrock across the site to aid in remediation of this deeper contamination. The students acquired, processed, and interpreted four types of geophysical data, and the final oral presentation of their results was recorded and broadcast by a local television station! So, the notoriety of our department continues to grow.

On the research front, the laboratory portion of the USDA experiment has concluded, and we are de-constructing our laboratory space and gearing up for field work this summer. As always, it was bittersweet to have several members of our research team graduate (Cale Anger, Brian Jordan, and Herald Schultz), but all are safely enrolled in graduate school or employed in exciting hydrogeology jobs, so I know they are off to a good start. Most of the rest of our team are now seasoned veterans, and they have been busy with research here and presenting results abroad.

Bridget Kelly, Bryan Hardel, Taylor Crist, and Crystal Nickel presented portions of the research at fall AGU, while Troy Moseley and Bryan Hardel presented at the Wisconsin Ground Water Association annual meeting, and Anna Baker presented at the Wisconsin chapter of the American Water Resources Association conference. Jake Heimdahl recently joined our team and is showing his prowess in data processing and soil-slinging, both of which are important components of this research! I am very fortunate to have such a great team of students who make this research possible.

Life at home remains busy and fun, with Joel (6) and Eleanor (1) making sure I am never bored. My main accomplishments at home are learning to play football (at least enough to keep up with a 6-year old) and serving as translator for Eleanor’s attempts at verbal communication. This is a part of life I never imagined before, but I find that I am really enjoying it!

KAREN HAVHOLM, Assistant Vice Chancellor of Research
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This year just flew by! With the graduation of my last research student, I am spending all my time on administration these days. It is still fun (most days) and challenging. The coming budgetary constraints may make it less fun and more challenging. This was the first summer I did not get into the field to do field work, but I did get a chance to briefly check out the Proterozoic Devils Island Sandstone (Hinckley Sandstone equivalent in Wisconsin) near Cornucopia in February. This year Lake Superior was sufficiently frozen to walk on the ice out to the sea cliffs. It was more of an aesthetic experience than a geological one, as the accessible rock face is mostly covered in ice. But it was beautiful, and the sedimentary structures visible did not contradict what former student Lynn Galston and I have seen at outcrops. Lynn presented her results at North-Central GSA and ILSG last spring.

One advantage of my role in the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs is inviting the judges for Research Day. I am thrilled that this year Terri Hogue, who graduated from our department in 1994, agreed to be one of our judges. We had a great visit with her when she was in town (see separate news item about Terri). As always, we hope many of you will visit your alma mater. When you do, be sure to stop by my office as well as the department.

ROBERT HOOPER, Professor
hooperrl@uwec.edu

This academic year finds Bob Hooper and family in high spirits despite the dismal national economy.

I was awarded a full-year sabbatical to work on my research and to take some personal time which has been almost nonexistent during my 17 years as Chair of the department. The sabbatical means I am not serving as Chair this year and not teaching any courses; what a difference this makes! Since my research involves electron microscopy, I have spent most of my time in the electron microscope laboratory in Eau Claire working on a number of projects involving the geochemistry of colloids and natural nano-materials. This includes projects examining colloids from a Ni deposit in the Yukon, volcanic sublimes from Mt Erebus in Antarctica, clays, environmental samples from the Coeur d’Alene mining district, and examining the effects of Ar-ion milling on the chemistry and crystallinity of a variety of natural samples.

Ginger and I have done some international travel, including Greece in October and the Dutch-Antilles in January; the later trip obviously timed to get us out of the Wisconsin winter scene. Because I can’t keep my fingers completely out of university politics, I have been participating in university-level long-range planning efforts to help UW-Eau Claire improve toward its stated goal of becoming one of the premier undergraduate universities in the Midwest.

Starting in May 2009 I will be returning to the real world and plan to resume my role as Chair and to teach my normal courses, including Rocky Mountain Field Studies, Mineralogy and Petrology I, Geochemistry and Physical Geology. The sabbatical has given me an opportunity to think about how my courses need to change to address the changing needs of today’s new student population, and I guess that’s the real value of the sabbatical. I really look forward at this point to getting back into the classroom to try out some of my new ideas and to reconnect to the students. After all, the university exists to...
provide the educational opportunities for our students – a focus we should never forget.

I plan on being around most of the summer, so if you have a chance to spend any time in Eau Claire, send an e-mail in advance and I’ll be happy to schedule a tour of our new laboratories and teaching spaces. I hope the newsletter finds you in good health. Please stay in touch with the department and remember with fondness the great years you spent as a student in our geology program.

PHILLIP IHINGER, Professor
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The 2008-2009 academic year has buzzed right on by, and here I am thinking that it has only just begun. Much of this is due to how busy it has been around here. I’ve been involved in a wide variety of committees and panels as our University struggles with the financial crunch that has hit the entire world. In spite of these pulls, though, the Ihinger lab has remained productive. My students presented eight posters at the UWEC Student Research Day this year, and one of the them, ‘Slab Penetration into the Lower Mantle: A Theoretical Construction’ by John A Peterson (2009; co-advised with Paul Thomas) won first prize in the Physical and Mathematical Sciences category (I think there might have been some disgruntled chemists in the audience). Last summer, I presented a talk on the evolution of geochemical reservoirs in Earth’s mantle to the Goldschmidt Conference in Vancouver. In addition, Steve Henke (2008), in collaboration with Paul and me, presented a poster on the simulation of crystal growth in hydrothermal fluids at that conference. At this year’s Goldschmidt Conference in Davos, Switzerland, my students are presenting two faculty-student collaborative research projects: Giselle Conde (2012; in collaboration with Ellery Frahm at UM-Twin Cities) is presenting her work on the characterization of obdian artifacts from the Middle East; and David Kawatski (2008) and Daniel Steltz (2010) are presenting their study showing how quartz crystals grew in hydrothermal environments using infrared spectroscopy. Meanwhile, my oldest daughter, Ghislaine, just completed her freshman year at Macalester College, while Mati (now age 8) and Evie (now age 4) continue to keep me grounded with regards to what is important in life. Hope to see all of you at this year’s GSA conference in Portland!

J. BRIAN MAHONEY, Professor
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Another year has flown by in the blink of an eye. Although the year was marred by indentured servitude (being Interim Department Chair), my research group and I still managed to conduct some very high quality research and participate in some excellent educational adventures. This was the last year of a major research project examining Cretaceous basins in south-central British Columbia, and we are now in the write-up phase. The project involved a detailed provenance analysis and basin reconstruction of the Cretaceous Jackass Mountain Group, focusing on the tectonic evolution of the region. The project included alumna Kate MacLaurin, who is working on a M.Sc. degree at Simon Fraser University, and two researchers from UWEC (Michelle Forgette and Liz Balgord). Kate was the lead author on a poster that won Best Student Paper at the annual Geological Society of America meeting in 2008.

We branched out into new research avenues this year by delving into a fascinating project in the Selwyn Basin, Yukon. The NiMo Project is investigating stratiform Ni-Zn-PGE sulfide mineralization within Devonian black shale contained within the Richardson anticlinorium in north-central Yukon Territory. The mineralization is thin (2-4 cm), but extends over >20,000 km² of basin floor, making it one of the world’s largest nickel deposits. Liz Balgord and I collected samples in very remote areas of the Yukon in 2008, and have been conducting stratigraphic, geochemical, and electron microscope analyses in collaboration with Bob Hooper to determine to genesis of this anomalous mineralization.

Our mapping and stratigraphic studies in Montana are continuing. We continue to publish about one quadrangle and year, and are making great strides in understanding the regional magmatic and stratigraphic evolution of southwest Montana. This year we will have a mapping crew of three (Julia Potter, Liz Balgord, Brennan Kadulski), and we will continue to map quadrangles on the northern edge of the Boulder batholith.

So many projects, so little time... I have been very lucky to continue to have excellent research students involved in a number of interesting projects. My thanks to all of them for their interest, motivation, and dedication to their projects.

On a happy note, after nine months of turmoil, our remodeled kitchen was formally christened in late May with a Back-to-the-Bush-type bash. Turns out the remodeled kitchen is an excellent place for relatively large gatherings – stop by and join us sometime!


BIANCA PEDERSEN, Visiting Assistant Professor
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Just as my first year at UW – Eau Claire, this past year has been extremely busy. I have had the opportunity to teach a large number of students in Environmental Geology, Hydrogeology I fall last, and a small group of students in Geochmistry this spring. From trouble-shooting new pressure transducers in Hydro I, developing projects for geochemistry, and working with my great research students on Lake Altoona, the past year has not only been busy but also very interesting and challenging as well.

It is with sadness that I will be leaving UW – Eau Claire at the end of this semester for opportunities yet unknown, but I know that my experiences here have helped me grow professionally and I look forward to the challenges of the future.

GEOFFREY PIGNOTTA, Assistant Professor
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After surviving my first year at UWEC, I’m happy to report that my second year has flown by as well. It has been a busy and adventure-filled year, both on campus and off. We’re settling into Eau Claire nicely after purchasing our first home. Now we’re busy trying to fill it with more than a single bedroom apartment’s worth of furniture, and dealing with routine driveway shoveling and grass cutting.

This past year has brought many new geologic adventures for me. I have enjoyed the new geology I have been exposed to in Montana — both at Field Camp II and through my involvement with Brian Mahoney, Phil Ihinger, and students and their EDMAP project. We’ll find a magmatic fabric in the Boulder batholith someday! Last summer also brought new research directions for me. Last summer I initiated research projects in the Coast Mountains of British Columbia, Canada (my native land), with scientific and logistical help from Brian Mahoney. Student Bryan Hardel and I toured parts of southern B.C. and spent time mapping and sample collecting in Bella Coola and Terrace. It was fantastic to be exposed to such beautiful terrain and awesome geology.

My expeditions last summer in Terrace, B.C., proved to be quite fruitful as they pro-
vided necessary background data to write a research proposal that was funded for future work in the area. So this summer my plans are to take students Bryan Hardel and Jessica Myers back to the Terrace area to investigate the relationship between magmatism/volcanism, deformation, and economic mineralization within Paleozoic strata in the Terrace area. Recently workers have suggested these rocks might host volanoigenic massive sulfide deposits. Brian Mahoney and newly graduated Liz Balgord will join us for the initial outings in the mountains surrounding Terrace. I’m very excited to start these new research directions and continue research in the Sierra Nevada batholith started prior to my arrival at UWEC. I’m certain that both old research and new will continue to provide new adventures.

LORI SNYDER, Senior Lecturer
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And time passes on…hello again for another update from the Department of Geology. Some familiar and some new events made the year a memorable one. The year began with the familiar kick-off, Rocky Mountain Field Studies, which turned out to be quite an adventure. The uncooperative weather kept the group guessing about what the next day would bring. Floods, blizzards – we had it all (see summary this newsletter). Fortunately, the group’s attitude remained upbeat and we were able to accomplish much of what we set out to do, along with finding some interesting new areas. The rest of the summer passed quickly with a few weeks of field work in Montana looking at the Eocene Avon Volcanic Complex, as well as plenty of time for recreation and relaxation.

Fall semester brought new responsibilities and courses. I took on the role of Undergraduate Program Coordinator, which entails acting as liaison for the Student Services personnel, coordinating the Department’s participation in their recruitment activities on campus, in addition to advising new/potential majors and transfer students. I have learned much! I also taught Earth Resources (Geology 301) for the first time and enjoyed it immensely. That experience, combined with personal and shared departmental interest to engage students in current issues, prompted the development of a new course in the Department of Geology – The Future of Global Energy (Geology 122). The course was accepted by the University Curriculum Committee and will be in the Fall 09 catalogue. I taught the course this spring as a special offering under the Interdisciplinary Studies umbrella (IDIS 152) and it has been a great success. The spring break trip this year was a transect of a modern volcanic arc from Guatemala to Belize. It was a spectacular experience… huge calderas, active volcanoes, impressive faults, a relatively healthy reef system, and Mayan history. The Central American culture made for a very full, but very satisfying, trip. Julia Potter presented her research on the Avon Volcanic Complex at the National Council on Undergraduate Research conference held in La Crosse along with approximately 2000 undergraduates from all over the world. What a year! Don’t forget to tell us how you are doing and stop by if you are in Eau Claire!

LORILIE STEINKE, Academic Department Associate
steinklm@uwec.edu

Another year has flown by in the department. Things continue to stay busy here as always. My position became full time this year which has been very beneficial for everyone. On the home front the girls are very active in many school functions. Morgan is a freshman this year and is really enjoying the high school experience. She spent spring break in Florida with the marching band and had a great time. Margo is in 7th grade this year and very active in band, volleyball and softball. When there is down time, we still enjoy spending time outside working in our yard, garden, and improving the fish pond.

If anyone is in the area please stop in and visit the department! Remember to keep sending us your news updates. We enjoy hearing how everyone is doing after graduating from UW-Eau Claire.

KENT SYV E RSON, Professor
sywerskm@uwec.edu

Greetings to all alumni! I am now in my 17th year at UW-Eau Claire – is that why I am so bald??

I taught Environmental Geology during spring/summer 2008. Last fall I had two great Oceanography classes – I was sad when I said goodbye to those students! I also led a glacial geology field trip for laypersons in Chippewa County. The September coach bus tour, sponsored by UWEC Continuing Education, was a huge success. Over 45 participants including my wife, mom, and sister. This was the first time my mom had seen me in a “real” geologist’s outfit. It was a lot of fun, and CE plans to offer the trip again on Sept. 26th – y’all come! I continue to be involved with First Amendment issues on campus. (I am now faculty advisor for the campus alternative newspaper The FlipSide. This is rather ironic because I disagree with 99% of the things written in The FlipSide, but I am willing to defend unpopular speech.)

On the research front, I worked with Andy Thompson (2008) to publish our evidence for a calving embayment in the Penobscot River valley near Bangor, ME (pdf available on my website). Andy presented his calving embayment research at NC GSA in Evansville, IN, in April 2008, and we toured an LST used on the beaches of Normandy during D-Day.

I have continued my work with students at the Blue Hills Felsenmeer in Rusk County. Audrey Mohr (2010) and Isaac Orr (2010) used GPR to prove that the Felsenmeer is actually a talus (a rock-fall deposit). Audrey and Isaac presented at NC GSA in Rockford, IL, and NCUR in La Crosse in April 2009. Isaac won an SEPM best student poster award at NC GSA, and Audrey won 2nd place in the Life and Earth Sciences division at Student Research Day. I co-organized a theme session for NC GSA-Rockford entitled “Quaternary Research in Wisconsin.” The session had 22 oral papers and eight posters, and many interesting OSU dates were presented. My article about lateral meltwater channels was published in the February issue of the Quaternary journal Boreas. In addition, I have become involved with frac sand exploration and politics in the State of Wisconsin. On 3/17/09 I was on Wisconsin Public Radio to discuss a heated frac sand controversy in Chippewa County (listen to the show at http://www.upr.org/regions/eau/twsarchive.cfm).

On the home front, we had a more relaxing year in 2008 because we stayed home this summer. We went to the Syverson family picnic and family Bible camp in NW Minnesota, took a brief trip to the North Shore of Lake Superior, and attended the Carlton County (MN) Fair. We also entertained both of my groomsmen’s families this summer, including an indoor “camping trip” at our house because of severe weather!

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!


JESSICA TERRIEN, Visiting Assistant Professor
terriej@uwec.edu

I joined the UWEC Department of Geology for the 2008-2009 academic year to teach Earth Science for elementary education majors. I have enjoyed my time at UWEC and have benefited from being a part of such a positive teaching environment. Everyone in the department and the University has been extremely helpful and has made me feel very welcome.

In addition to teaching, I am currently (FACULTY NEWS continued on page 12)
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.

During the past year, 26 individuals/companies donated $7,605 to the Geology Foundation accounts. Please understand that all gifts, large or small, are greatly appreciated! Please consider giving something back to your undergraduate department.

Due to the economic crisis, 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.)

Name ___________________________ ________________________ ________________________

Address ___________________________ ___________________________ ___________________________

City_________________________ State________ Zip________________________

Phone ___________________________ Email ___________________________

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

____ Record jointly with my spouse (Spouse’s name) ____________________________

____ Record in my name only

____ In memory of ____________________________

Credit Card Gift ___ VISA ___ MasterCard _____ Discover _____ American Express

Number ____________________________ Exp Date ____________________________

Signature ____________________________ Date ____________________________

_____ 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.

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University of Wisconsin Eau Claire Foundation, Inc.
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/faultndy/ESSS/Index.html. 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 runningl@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!


Antoinette Winkler-Prins, Department of Geography, Michigan State University, “The Amazon: Cultural Parkland or Pristine Wilderness,” 10/3/08.

Ellery Frahm, University of Minnesota, “Blasting Stone Tools with Electron Beams and Other Fun with Geoarchaeology,” 10/10/08.

Kent Syverson, Geology Department, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, “So You’re Interested in Applying to Graduate School?!,” 10/24/08.

Patrick Belmont, St. Anthony Falls Laboratory, University of Minnesota, “Sediment Dynamics in a Complex Landscape, Le Sueur River Basin, Southern Minnesota,” 11/7/08.

Melissa Lenczewski, Department of Geology, Northern Illinois University, “Geomicrobiology: What Geologists Need to Know About Bacteria,” 11/14/08.

Alan Wanamaker, School of Ocean Sciences, Bangor University (United Kingdom), “North Atlantic Climate Variability During the Last Millennium,” 2/23/09.


Thank You

Department Donors

The Department would like to thank the generous donors listed below who have contributed to Geology Department accounts with UW-Eau Claire Foundation since June 2008.

GOLDER/CARGILL GEOLOGY SCHOLARSHIP
Greg and Julie Beckstrom
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PAUL MYERS & RONALD WILLIS GEOLOGY FIELD CAMP SCHOLARSHIP
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David and Elizabeth Meyer
Roger and Julie Oreskovich
Curt and Laura Peck
Heidi Rantala
Todd and Elizabeth Renville
David and Janice Risch
Kristin and David Weaver-Bowman
Mae and Curt Willkom

Potter and Crist win Myers/Willis Field Camp Scholarships

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.

Julia Potter and Taylor Crist were awarded $200 Myers/Willis Field Camp Scholarships to participate in Field Camp II in Montana this summer. Julia is a senior geology major from Campbellsport, WI, and former recipient of the Golder/Cargill Geology Scholarship. Taylor is a senior geology-engineering dual degree major from Eau Claire (Memorial High School). 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 scholarship fund.

Potter and Crist win Myers/Willis Field Camp Scholarships winners Julia Potter (left) Taylor Crist (center) with Brian Mahoney.
finishing my PhD at Syracuse University. My dissertation research focuses on understanding the relationship between magmatism and extension of the earth’s crust to form the Catalina Mountains in southeastern Arizona. I have chosen a combination of geophysics and thermochronology that allows me to characterize the complex thermal history of the region and understand its evolution through time.

Emeritus Faculty

News

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

So, here’s the next exciting installment in the continuing saga of “Paul Myers, Precambrian Geologist (Dropout).” I figure if Garrison Keillor can do it with English majors, I can do it with geologists, although I have no illusions about achieving Keillor’s exalted literary stature. Just remember - you asked for it.

From UW-EC, I retired to Vermont in 1997. Please don’t ask why. Here in Vermont, we keep praying for global warming. Vermont has four distinct colors: green (Summer), Orange (Foliage), White (You guessed it), and Brown (Mud). With such extreme climatic changes one would think it impossible to get bored. Between November and May, you have to carefully plan all outdoor excursions. You NEVER go out alone without notifying the Town Constable, who puts you on a “Watch List.” Just feeding the birds (including the snowbirds. One does NOT ask “Why?” One “just does it.” Clothing is everything. That’s why Vermonters have huge closets for snow pants, parkas, boots (mukluks, “waders,” etc.), snowshoes, etc. To give you an idea of the severity of the White Season, the snow has just receded to the bottom of the windows on the north side of the house. It’s March 8th. And we’re still waiting for the ”March Blizzard!” I am including a sketch of our house two weeks ago. After surviving the White Season, you slip unconsciously into the Brown Season. For your edification, I have included a “self-written poem.”

I wrote this after my first experience with slush ‘n mud in 2004. Apologies for the language, but mud does that to anyone – ANY-ONE! If you think winter was unbearable, don’t stick around for Mud Season – it’s worse. That’s why 70% of local homes are vacant during the White and Brown seasons, and why cars and trucks have rooftop escape hatches. While skiing justifies occasional forays to this place during winter, mud has NO worthwhile qualities. Visitors must remember to get out before the back roads (like ours) gelatinize for the season. Stay away until June – at least. It’s true, there are occasions (admittedly rare) when it’s beautiful here in the Green Mountains, but one’s memory of those days fades quickly after the first of November. Actually, October is usually quite nice. Mere survival is actually a full-time pursuit here – especially if you’re stupid or broke enough to stay year-round like we do. At least we get to enjoy the November farewell parties and the June “welcome home” parties for all the snowbirds.

I paint and draw landscapes and landmarks, write “curmudgeon letters” to Vermont newspapers about winter survival in leaky Vermont homes, localvorism, and the hazards of nuclear power. For amusement, I occasionally (but not too often) entertain kids or adults with mineralogists, rocks and fossils. My wife Welthy and I run the Manchester Film Forum. She’s very busy with micro-enterprise activities throughout the country, so she spends as much time as possible in far-away meeting places. We’re lucky to be healthy and to have plenty of things to help us pass the time. As we’ve said before, you’re invited to come for a visit, geological or otherwise. There’s plenty of wood to split.

John Tinker, Professor Emeritus

tinkerjr@tirowest.net

I send a warm hello to all current and past geology students and faculty. I am still completing hydrogeological projects on Precambrian rock through Pleistocene sediment, from fractured nonporous rock to unconsolidated porous glacial sediment. Every project is challenging and fun. Most of the work is in Wisconsin.

When consulting gets me to the UWEC Library, I walk through the Geology Department to remember all the good days of teaching and working with my former students. You made teaching fun and exciting.

In the last newsletter I mentioned hunting, fishing, working on my “hobby farm”, and perhaps my wellness program (my dog Scout). Not much has changed. I am still doing all of the above. I continue to spend time with my five grandchildren who live in Eau Claire. The oldest is learning to drive and the youngest is only three years old. Christine, my wife and best friend, still puts up with me even after 42 years of marriage.

Please continue your communication with the Geology Department. Dr. Syverson does an excellent job with the Department’s newsletter. I and many others enjoy reading about our current and former students.

As I write this update, I especially look forward to seeing Terri Hogue as a judge for the 2009 UWEC Student Research Day and Kristie Franz’s presentation to the Geology Department. Both are fantastic role models for our present geology students!

Take care!

SLUSH ‘N MUD

Spring is here!
Stop that sneer
Go outside
And laugh and cheer
Stomp ’n cheer
Drink a beer,
Spring is here!
Oops, now wait a minute.
Truck is stuck
In the muck
An’ with my luck
I can’t get in it.
See that bird
Drop his turd.
Oh, my word!
He fell right in it.

by Paul E. Myers 03/01/04

by Paul Myers expressing his feelings about winters in Vermont....

Mohr wins Golder/Cargill Geology Student Scholarship

Audrey Mohr is the recipient of the 2009-10 Golder/Cargill Scholarship. Audrey is a senior comprehensive hydrogeology major from New Ulm, MN. Audrey has conducted geomorphology research on the Blue Hills Felsenmeer with Kent Syverson (see her award-winning poster in the Student Research Day section). This summer she will be studying Paleozoic glacial deposits in Brazil as part of a program through University of Minnesota-Morris.

This scholarship, established fall 2005 by Greg (UW-Eau Claire geology alumnus, 1984) and Julia Beckstrom (UW-Eau Claire alumnus, 1985), is for comprehensive geology majors who have completed Mineralogy-Petrology I, developed an excellent academic record, and demonstrated a financial need.
thus far, the people of this city and their culture are quite unique from the rest of the country. It should be interesting.”

Casey Bowe (2004). Casey is finishing his third year as a secondary earth science and physical science teacher in Greybull. He was married in July to Sarah, a kindergarten teacher. They purchased a home and write, “We have been spending most of our time (and money) preparing for our first baby together which is due April 9th. The baby is supposed to be a girl, so I’m on the lookout for a pink rock hammer.”

Josh Carlisle (2002). Josh currently lives in Denver, CO. He writes, “I have been navigating the regulatory and environmental landscape for oil and gas projects across WY and CO for six years and enjoy the challenge. We are weathering the reduction in work associated with the downturn in the economy, the reduction in energy prices, and the idle drilling rigs across the Rockies. We are enjoying life more than ever in Denver with some old college roommates nearby and many fun things to do in the outdoors.”

Mark Ciardelli (2004). Mark is working for Foth Infrastructure & Environment, LLC, Green Bay, WI.

Dan (1999) and Jody [Brandrup] (2000) Dahlman. Dan reports, “Jody and I continue to be avid outdoor enthusiasts and adventurers. Canoeing, rock climbing, mountain biking, and skiing keep us entertained throughout the year, and while we miss the steep crags of the Rockies, we love exploring the Land of 10,000 Lakes. When we aren’t dressed in GoreTex, never-ending house projects keep us extremely busy, as do our careers!”

Brian Dwyer (1999). Brian is an acquisition manager for a LiDAR firm in Corvallis, OR. He manages both aerial and ground crews for three different planes and laser systems in the US, Canada, Central and South America.

Andrew Eddy (2004). Andrew is employed by the MN Pollution Control Agency as a project manager in the Petroleum Remediation Program. He has been working for MPCA 2.5 years, and prior to that spent several years consulting. Andrew.Eddy@state.mn.us.

Christopher Elvrum (1992). Chris has worked as a water supply planner for the Metropolitan Council in St. Paul for the past 10 years. He has been working on a regional water supply plan for the Twin City area which should be completed by the time of this newsletter. He lives in the area with his wife and three kids ages 6, 4 and 6 months.

Krystina Engebos (2007). Krystina is working as a geologist for Conestoga-Rovers and Associates in Plainville, CT. She is currently developing and maintaining remediation programs for retail petroleum sites.

Christopher Fell (2004). Chris encountered the Geology 303 course at Devil’s Tower in May 2008 – small world! Chris is a staff geologist for Zipper Zeman Associates, which is owned by Terracon. The company performs geotechnical, environmental and construction materials testing for clients in both public and private sectors. He writes that “exposure to GIS at field camp has been invaluable in my post-bachelor’s degree work.”

Michelle Forgette (2008). Michelle recently moved to Winnebucca, NV, and is employed as an underground production geologist at Turquoise Ridge with Barrick Gold Corporation.

Kristie Franz (1995). Kristie continues to be an Asst. Professor at Iowa State University. Kristie presented a research talk in the UWEC Earth Science Seminar Series in May. See the separate news item “Two Friends” in this newsletter for more about Kristie.

Kristen Gunderson (1995). Kristen writes, “I was in planes quite a bit last year working with clients in the tissue and rubber industries on ISO 14001 management systems. In addition to travel all over the US, I made two trips to Campinas, Brazil. Managed to pick up a little Portuguese and a taste for Caipirinhas (Brazil’s national cocktail made with cachaca--kind of like rum, only more potent). And I am still sailing on Lake Michigan - a much needed escape from reality!”

Ryan Hammes (2003). After graduation, Ryan taught Outdoor Education in southern California and spent four years as a guide for Outward Bound in Colorado. He received his Master’s in Adventure Education from UW-La Crosse and is currently living in Sonoma County, CA, where he oversees the outdoor recreation program and teaches for the Kinesiology Department at Sonoma State University.

Michelle Haskin (1998). Michelle is living in Seattle with her husband, Adrian. She has been teaching at Green River Community College and is hoping to work at other local colleges in her area.

Brian Hennings (1999). Brian is a professional geologist in Wisconsin and works for Natural Resource Technology in Pewaukee, WI.


Steve Hoaglund (2007). Steve is working on his Master’s at the UMD. He writes, “I have been making slow but steady progress on my thesis. I keep running into engineering issues which are slowing me down. I am looking forward to running my samples on the mass spectrometer this summer.”

David Hodek (1995). Dave reports, “I’m still working as a Senior Environmental Engineer with Enbridge Energy in Superior, WI. I’ve been here almost a year, and still enjoy the job. The shift to management instead of just doing technical work has taken some adjustment, but overall is going well. Since I started this job about two weeks after our youngest (Sarah) was born, it’s been a year of change for our family. With two kids now and the new job, Teresa has taken some time off nursing and is staying home with the kids. That was one of the primary reasons for taking the new job in the first place. Our oldest, Sonja, is 3 ½ and loves the Duluth-Superior area -- climbing on rock outcrops, watching ships and trains, and seeing Grandpa and Grandma. We took a trip to the Grand Canyon in December, and she kept asking me to identify the rocks she was picking up. Later, I saw her stuffing rocks into her pockets. I asked her why, and she replied they were for her rock collection. I was pretty proud.”

Terri Hogue (1995). Terri recently was promoted to Associate Professor at UCLA. She came back to UWEC to judge Student Research Day in 2009! See the “Two Friends” article in this newsletter for more news from Terri.

Matt Hostak (1989). Matt writes “I’m still digging antique bottles & artifacts from old outhouse pits, but the past year I’ve expanded to the water. Have done a lot of scuba diving in Lake Winnibago and some diving in the Fox River, but so far with little success. One thing I learned last year: It’s not a good idea to scuba dive in a 6-foot deep boat channel on a busy summer weekend with lots of boat traffic, especially when it’s prohibited by law. Live and learn!”

Breck Johnson (2004). Breck and his wife Erin welcomed Adelle (Addie) Ann Johnson to their family in March 2009. They live in The Woodlands, TX, where Breck is working for Anadarko Petroleum Corporation as a geologist. He defended his M.S. thesis in January at UNC, which was titled “Formation of K-feldspar Megacrysts in Granodioritic Plutons by Thermal Cycling and Late-Stage Textural Coarsening.”

Tony Jones (1992). Tony is working at the Oneida County Land Information Office. He is making maps with ArcGIS software. He and his wife Nancy have four children and a dog. He adds that his “new hobbies include (ALUMNI NEWS continued on page 14)”
bottle and metal detecting, and perhaps privy excavating.” He sends his greetings to Matt Hostek…

Aaron Kent (2004). Aaron has been employed at Tetra Tech in Chippewa Falls for three years after working as an Environmental Scientist for Cedar Corporation for two years after graduation. Tetra Tech conducts geotechnical and exploratory drilling locally and nationally. Aaron writes, “My wife Cinthia (a UWEC alumna) and I now have three beautiful children (6, 2 and 7 months) and purchased a great home five days before X-mas 08.”

Josh Kohn (2000). Josh is working on his teaching license and Master's degree at the University of St. Thomas in the area of Earth and Space Science. He married Karissa O'Keefe in January 2009 in Breckenridge, CO. Karissa is a UWEC computer science graduate. They own a house in St. Paul.

Stephanie Larsen (2001). Steph is living in Lyons, NE, and is working at the Center for Rural Affairs. She writes, “My work at the moment centers around organizing rural people around health reform, but still relates to farming and sustainable agriculture since without affordable health care, farmers can’t afford to farm.”

Kate MacLaurin (2006). Kate is working on her master's degree at Simon Fraser University. She received a student poster award at the 2008 GSA annual meeting in Houston, TX, in the Sedimentary Geology division.

Paul Overlien (1994). Paul and his family relocated to St. Cloud, MN, in December 2007. He writes, “Although we miss the Driftless Area of southwest Wisconsin, we are enjoying our new home and surroundings in the “Granite City.” His daughter Anya is in first grade and daughter Greta will be starting kindergarten.

Jeff Paddock (1997). Jeff writes, “I just passed my ASBOG tests and became a registered Illinois project geologist in December. No more studying structural and engineering geology before work every day! My company is getting into geophysics for groundwater exploration, so I’ll be trained to operate several instruments this year. We’re also going international; hopefully we’ll be going to Russia and Mexico soon. I’m going to Haiti in May for groundwater exploration for relief agencies. We’ll actually be mapping rock formations like at field camp. Hope I remember how to use my Brunton.”

Gretchen (Peters) Lippert (1999). Gretchen is currently employed as an Inventory Lead with Artbeads.com, an online retailer of craft and beading supplies, near Gig Harbor, WA. She writes, “My family, consisting of husband Dylan (Political Science, May 1999), daughters Sienna (8) and Alexa (5), and three dogs, enjoys spending time playing outside, working on various boat and home improvement projects, sailing, finding new ways to be more “green,” and taking occasional fuel-efficient trips in our diesel Jetta to the ocean to fly kites.”

Steve Peterson (1997). Steve writes, “I am still busy doing regional groundwater flow modeling for the USGS in Nebraska. We use a wide variety of approaches to build, constrain, and support the models. Also getting ready to start working on the High Plains Water-Availability Study, part of a nationwide USGS program of resources assessment. In my off time, I spend time with my kids, and also enjoy gardening, fishing, boating, some occasional hunting, playing some guitar, and still howling at the moon once in awhile. Would be happy to hear from former classmates!”

David Prose (1976). David has spent 30 years in the oil industry. He recently moved to Artesia, New Mexico, and is working with Yates Petroleum Corp.

Renee Ransom (2007). Renee is an environmental consultant for Terracon. She is living in a cabin on Lake Denoon in Muskego, WI. She adds that “I really miss the crew, and my education in the Geology Department was definitely an unforgettable one.”

Mark Sautter (1994). Mark reports that he is currently between jobs, but has taken up creative writing and has published a few short stories and poems. He is married and has a son Tucker (17), a daughter Tessa (12), a stepson Bruce (15), and a stepdaughter Megan (9). They also have two basset hounds and an Akita. Mark writes, “It is a very odd (and often crowded) house.” He adds, “I fondly remember my years at UWEC (all six of them).”

Andrew Thompson (2008). Last fall Andy enjoyed the campaign life in New Hampshire where he worked on Jeanne Shaheen’s bid for the U.S. Senate. He adds, “New England is still the awesome place I remember.”

Chad Underwood (1996). Chad reports, “In July 2008, I became part owner of a small geotechnical/structural engineering firm called Engineering Partners International, LLC, with offices in Bloomington, MN, and Madison. We provide geotechnical and structural design for foundations, excavation support systems, and construction dewatering systems. I have had an opportunity to work on several challenging projects. It has been a great move for me personally and professionally. On the personal front, Alison and I are having a blast with our two kids – Griffin and Abigail. The kids turned 2 in December, and we quickly learned that the bigger they get, the bigger their stuff gets. So the logical thing to do … Yes - buy a minivan. I prefer to think of it as doing our part to stimulate the economy!”

Aaron Walczak (1998). Aaron teaches science and coaches cross country at Hudson Middle School where he has been employed the past two years. He and his wife Stephanie are moving from Woodville to Hudson in spring 2009. He adds, “Most of our time is spent running, snowshoeing, skiing, playing with our dogs, and traveling in the summers.”

Kristin Weaver Bowman (1996). Kris reports, “I continue to raise a couple of active boys and try to impress upon them the wonders of the earth. Yesterday we hiked to an offset drainage along the San Andreas fault. However, the boys were more impressed by the friable Pelona Schist and felt compelled to pull schist off the outcrop and throw. Future boulder-rollers, no doubt. I am still teaching introductory Earth Science classes for future teachers. In April a colleague and I will be running a workshop on Earthquakes for pre- and in-service teachers at the NAGT Far Western Section Spring Field Conference. Next May (Memorial Day weekend, 2010) CSUF is hosting the Cordilleran Section of GSA. If an Earthquake workshop by yours truly doesn’t draw you to it, perhaps our proximity to great geology (and Disneyland) will convince you to attend. If you do, let me know!”

Sarah (Weaver) Moore (1996). Sarah writes, “We are living in yet another home, this time in Alexandria, VA. There is never a dull moment and my job responsibilities are continually changing. Whereas in the past I had been focusing on waste removal and research on sleep patterns in the toddler set, I am now turning my attention to alternative dispute resolution/mediation, home sanitation (with a concentration bathrooms used mostly by males), job training, activity planning, and scheduling. It’s a great job and I hope to keep it until my little charges (Sam-4 and Henry-2 1/2) start school.”

Beth Wenell (1999). Beth writes, “My family relocated from Vancouver, BC, to Minneapolis last May and I am networking and hoping to find work in environmental consulting/remediation. I’m meeting a lot of great geologists in the Cities, so if you are in the area, let’s meet for coffee!”

Mae Willkom (1998). Mae writes, “I am still plugging away at DNR, but things have gotten more interesting. I just got re-classed from Senior Hydro to Advanced Hydro, and I am taking on some Superfund sites, in addition to my RCRA Corrective Action sites.” Her oldest daughter passed her board exams in veterinary medicine and graduates in spring 2009.
Student Research Day – Spring 2009

The Seventeenth Annual UW-Eau Claire Student Research Day was held April 27-29, 2009, in Zorn Arena on the UWEC campus. This event showcases faculty/student collaborative research occurring on campus. The Geology Department has been very well represented throughout the years, and this year was no exception. All of the students noted below presented posters this year. We are very proud of our students!

Note: Students who presented posters at professional conferences are also indicated. Student travel to conferences was supported with money from the Geology Advancement Fund and the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs.


John Peterson with Phillip Ihinger and Paul Thomas, “Slab Penetration into the Lower Mantle: A Theoretical Construction.” Winner of 1st place poster award in the Physical and Mathematical Sciences division at Student Research Day (see photo).


Taylor Crist, Bryan Hardel, Brennan Kadulski, Troy Moseley, and Alex Thompson with J. Brian Mahoney and Lori Snyder, “Exploring Belize and its Barrier Reef: Formation, Ecosystem, Culture, and Human Influence on the Reef.”

Elizabeth Balgord, Julia Potter, Carrie Weiss, Nathan Heuer, John Wrasse with J. Brian Mahoney and Lori Snyder, “Geologic Exploration of the Northern Central American Arc: A Transect from the Guatemalan Highland into the Back Arc Rainforests.”

Elizabeth Balgord, Julia Potter, Michelle Forgette, and Nick King with J. Brian Mahoney, Phillip Ihinger and Geoffrey Pignotta, “Geological Analysis of the Northern Margin of the Boulder Batholith: An EdMap Project.”

Giselle Conde with Phillip Ihinger, “Water Speciation in Natural Obsidian: Two Thermal Regimes of Hydration.” Giselle will present this paper at the summer 2009 Goldschmidt Conference in Davos, Switzerland.

Christopher Olson and Brennan Kadulski with Phillip Ihinger, “Granite-Gabbro Relations in the Mineral Lake Intrusive Complex.”

Elizabeth Balgord with J. Brian Mahoney and Phillip Ihinger, “Reinterpreting Cambrian Paleography, Southwest Montana.”

Elizabeth Balgord with J. Brian Mahoney and Robert Hooper, “Examining the Genesis of the Middle Devonian NiMo Deposit, Selwyn Basin, Yukon.”

Nicholas Borchardt with Katherine Grote, “Geophysical Site Characterization for Groundwater Remediation at a Chemical Recycling Center in Eau Claire, WI.”


Daniel Steltz and David Kawatski with Phillip Ihinger, “Two Stage Growth Evolution of Hydrothermal Quartz: Impurities Tell the Story.” Daniel will present this paper at the summer 2009 Goldschmidt Conference in Davos, Switzerland.

Isaac Orr and Audrey Mohr with Kent Syverson and Harry Jol, “Sedimentology of the Blue Hills Felsenmeer State Natural Area, Wisconsin.” Presented at North-Central GSA meeting in Rockford, IL, April 3, 2009, and the National Council for Undergraduate Research meeting in La Crosse, WI, April 17, 2009. Winner of the SEPM Best Undergraduate Student Paper Award at NC GSA.


Nicholas King and Amy Wichlacz with Douglas Faulkner (Dept. of Geography), “Planimetric Channel Change along the Lower Chippewa River in West-Central Wisconsin, 1938-2008.” Winner of the 6th place poster award in the Life and Earth Sciences division at Student Research Day (see photo).


Liz Balgord and Michelle Forgette with J. Brian Mahoney, “Redefinition of the Precambrian/Cambrian Contact in Southwestern Montana.” Presented at Geological Society of America Joint Annual Meeting in Houston, TX, October 4-8, 2008.
Can You .....